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ABSTRACT

This handbook and the accompanying workbook grew out of a series of workshops on superintendent appraisal designed to find a way to clarify and strengthen the board-superintendent relationship and to enable boards to constructively evaluate superintendent performance. The guidelines are intended to acquaint board members and superintendents with some important principles of evaluation and, in particular, with performance appraisal procedures. (MLF)

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A performance-based program for school boards and superintendents

Planned Appraisal of the Superintendent

A handbook

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EA 010 654

Illinois Association of School Boards

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By Ronald R. Booth and Gerald R. Gleub

Planned Appraisal of the Superintendent

A performance-based program for school boards and superintendents

By
Ronald R. Booth
Gerald R. Glaub

Illinois Association of School Boards
330 Iles Park Place
Springfield, Illinois 62718

The Authors

Ronald R. Booth
Director of Management Information
Illinois Association of School Boards

Gerald R. Glaub
Director of Communications
Illinois Association of School Boards

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Thank you . . .

In the course of gathering information and ideas for this book, the Illinois Association of School Boards received assistance from many people. Some made presentations at Association workshops, contributing insights about their own evaluation systems. Others reviewed and criticized early drafts of this handbook.

IASB is extremely grateful to the following district superintendents for sharing their ideas with the Association and/or for critically reviewing early drafts of the handbook: **David Byrne** (Leyden Township); **Thomas Brown** (Sycamore); **Arthur Bruning** (Joliet); **George Evans** (Normal); **John Fields** (Naperville); **Charles Fowler** (Fairfield, Connecticut); **Allen Klingenberg** (Lake Forest); **John Savage** (Crete-Monee); **William Smith** (Alsip); **Drew Starsiak** (Hinsdale); and **Stephen Storkel** (Evergreen Park).

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About this book . . .

This handbook and the accompanying workbook grew out of a series of workshops on superintendent appraisal conducted by the Illinois Association of School Boards in cooperation with the Illinois Association of School Administrators during the fall and winter of 1976. The workshops followed a series of meetings across Illinois at which board members and administrators expressed their concerns with the mounting pressures placed upon the board-superintendent relationship. More than a year in the making, the workshops were designed to meet the needs expressed in the earlier meetings—that is, to find a way to clarify and strengthen the board-superintendent relationship and to enable boards to constructively evaluate superintendent performance.

The workshops drew on the talents of numerous superintendents and board members. This input was used by Ronald Booth and Gerald Glaub, who were assigned primary responsibility for building the workshops and for synthesizing basic principles into written form. This handbook and the appraisal workbook represent the results.

This handbook is designed to acquaint board members and superintendents with some important principles of evaluation and, in particular, with performance appraisal procedures.

The related workbook will help the board and superintendent tailor a performance appraisal system to suit their own needs. It consists of 10 separate exercises that guide the board and superintendent through the planning and decision making that must precede successful performance appraisal.

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1/Why planned appraisal?

The busy school board member is probably moved to ask: "Why should we go to the extra work and trouble of setting up an appraisal system? We trust our superintendent and know he's already overworked. So why should we add one more task?"

The answer is that appraisal represents more than a "task." It is one of the school board's fundamental responsibilities. Contrary to some popular notions, effective appraisal is not designed merely to provide the superintendent with a report card. Nor is it merely to provide a basis for pay increases or contract renewal. While these purposes may be served by an appraisal system, the real aim is to ensure good education through effective governance and management of the schools.

Effective School Governance

The school board is legally responsible to the state and politically responsible to the community for the operation of the school district.

Different boards, of course, have different ways of meeting these responsibilities. Some boards are more successful than others. Unfortunately, only a few boards know for sure how well they are doing because only a few use monitoring or evaluation systems. Here are some different ways that school boards function:

Custodial school boards are those content to serve as rubber stamps and automatically approve staff recommendations. They require little information or justification when asked, for example, to approve a new program. By failing to accept full local responsibility for proper management and operation of the district, the custodial school board shifts its responsibility to the state. The board may believe it is delegating responsibility to the superintendent. However, the board cannot give away its responsibility, and "delegating" does not mean the board is not responsible.

Responsibility moves upward. What the board delegates to the superintendent is *authority*—and the superintendent should be held responsible to the board for the effective use of that delegated authority. Teacher militancy and public unrest are making custodial school boards a thing of the past. Board members are feeling intense pressure to "do something."

Lay-administrative school boards run their districts and simply dictate orders and duties for their superintendents to carry out according to their wishes. The superintendent merely follows the board's day-to-day instructions rather than functioning as a manager with decision-making authority delegated by the board. Such a board makes virtually all the decisions itself, but because its members usually are not experts in education, educational decisions get put off. The emphasis is on purchasing lawn mowers, hiring coaches, and approving the bills for payment.

The lay-administrative board errs in not delegating adequate authority to the superintendent. It can also err by holding the superintendent responsible for things over which he is given no authority. A superintendent with no authority cannot meet the day-to-day administrative needs of the schools and eventually earns the contempt of teachers, students, and parents.

Policy-making school boards make major policy decisions and hold the superintendent responsible for running the schools in accordance with those policies. Such boards know what the schools are supposed to accomplish, state their intentions clearly in written policies, and regularly monitor the results. A policy-making board delegates to the superintendent the appropriate authority needed to manage the district. Board and superintendent understand and respect one another's roles. The board also is able to engage in two-way communication with the public without fear of embarrassment, because each board member understands what the district is doing and why.

No school board is all bad or all good. No school board falls entirely into just one of the above categories. The typical school board functions as a policy maker most of the

time. But that same board lapses into the custodial mode from time to time because it's easier and because members become content and "leave it up to the superintendent." At other times, a crisis will stampede that same board into an administrative role, momentarily taking the reins away from the superintendent. Being a good school board is typically a matter of degree: the more the board has been involved in planning and policy development, the more likely it is to be prepared for crises and to stay within its proper role.

All school boards, however, find it difficult to stay in the policy-making role at all times unless they have some way to determine how well the superintendent executes its policies. Because the board is responsible for the schools, the policy-making role is incomplete without an evaluation system.

Policy-making and appraisal are virtually inseparable.

Effective School Management

Conventional school district organization has the school board as a *governing* body and the superintendent as the person responsible for *management* (or administration). Although the school board is technically responsible for management, it should go without saying that every board needs a superintendent who manages the district effectively.

The board also needs a system for monitoring district performance and ensuring that the superintendent is managing the district effectively and within board policies.

"Effective management" is not easy to define in terms that are equally useful to all school boards. There are some questions that each board must resolve for itself. For example:

1) Is our board making the decisions that it ought to be making, or is it bogged down with administrative decisions? Is the superintendent making policy decisions?

2) Does the board receive effective leadership from the superintendent in the form of information, advice, and recommendations on board actions?

3) Do the board and superintendent understand and support one another? Is there mutual trust and respect? Or is the relationship dependent on blind faith?

4) What kinds of problems are coming to the board? Would they be more readily solved by adequate policies and/or planning?

5) Is the board adequately informed as to the district's problems, progress, accomplishments, and needs? Do board members and the superintendent agree on what the schools are supposed to accomplish?

6) Do board members feel comfortable with the programs and operations of the school district? Are they comfortable with the work of the superintendent? Is the feeling based on fact, informed opinion, or blind faith?

The school board that cannot provide satisfactory answers to questions like these will benefit most from a planned appraisal system. This is true—not because the superintendent's work is suspect—but because the board and superintendent need improved communications and, perhaps, more clearly defined roles. Their relationship may be amicable on the surface, but it lacks a strong foundation.

The value of planned appraisal is that it forces the board and superintendent to examine their relationship and to develop more clearly defined roles. The board and superintendent learn what to expect from one another and from themselves. That represents the first step toward effective management—and a very large step at that.

The Benefits of Appraisal

School boards are obligated to ensure citizens that their schools are properly run. An effective system for appraising the superintendent's performance enables the board to meet this obligation without interfering in the day-to-day administration of the schools. Regular evaluation is an alternative to second-guessing the superintendent or to supporting him with blind faith.

Probably the chief benefit of planned appraisal, therefore, is that it enables the school board to fulfill its governance responsibilities and encourages effective management at

the same time. Policy setting and appraisal forge a proper bond between governance and management. As important as this is, planned appraisal offers additional benefits:

1) Appraisal encourages improved performance. A superintendent must grow as demands of the job grow. It helps the superintendent understand his own strengths and weaknesses.

2) Appraisal enables the board to make informed decisions about contract renewal (or non-renewal) and compensation. The superintendent knows what standards the board has set for him. He doesn't have to guess.

3) Appraisal generates understanding between the board and superintendent. Both learn what is expected of themselves and one another.

4) Appraisal enables the board and superintendent to deal with differences at a time other than during a crisis.

5) Appraisal offers a way to commend work well done with genuine sincerity.

6) Appraisal provides a powerful defense against the superintendent's critics because it records evidence of performance and improvement.

7) Appraisal of the superintendent forces the board to examine its own performance.

In addition to these benefits, an appraisal process that focuses on performance (rather than traits or behavior) forces the board and superintendent to plan for the future.

Planned appraisal is what this book is about.

2/The board-superintendent relationship

Beyond a few statutory provisions, the relationship between the school board and the superintendent is controlled more by common sense than by law. The board and the superintendent are free to develop the kind of working relationship that best suits their respective needs and the needs of the school district.

On the face of it, this appears to be a healthy situation, for it allows the board and superintendent to work out the most appropriate division of responsibilities.

There are pitfalls, however. The board-superintendent relationship can be left to chance. The board and/or superintendent can easily make some unwarranted assumptions about their respective responsibilities. The board can assume that the superintendent knows precisely what is expected of him, when in fact, he is being guided by ideas that are entirely foreign to members of the board. Moreover, the membership of a school board can change dramatically in just a few years, which often changes the board's expectations.

In order to capitalize on the flexibility provided by the law, the school board and superintendent must agree on the terms of their relationship and reduce those terms to writing. Contrary to what some board members and superintendents seem to think, putting things in writing improves their working relationship because it clarifies expectations and improves communication. If a superintendent is to provide vigorous leadership, he must know, among other things:

1) The school board's plans, goals, and objectives for the district.

2) How the district goals and objectives translate into

duties and responsibilities of the superintendent. That is, what does the board expect him to accomplish?

3) How the board itself functions.

4) How the board will evaluate his work.

5) How he will be rewarded.

6) His status with the board regarding continued employment.

When information of this kind is written into a contract, job description, and/or board policies, both the board and superintendent can function intelligently and confidently. They know who is doing what and they are prepared as a team to face whatever situations arise.

Before a school board and superintendent can agree on an appropriate working relationship they must both understand the parameters established by law. Both boards and superintendents must understand where their authority comes from and to whom they are responsible for the exercise of that authority.

School Board Authority

Public education is a responsibility of the state. The legislature is the source of virtually all educational decision-making authority. However, the legislature delegates much of that authority to local school boards. The local board, therefore, is an agency of state government and is subject to regulation both by laws enacted by the legislature and by legislatively-authorized rules of the State Board of Education.

In Illinois, the General Assembly delegates to local school boards an impressive array of duties and powers. *Duties* are those things which a school board must do in order to lawfully operate a recognized school district. Article 10 of *The School Code of Illinois*, Sections 10-20 and 10-21, lists such duties of school boards as: maintain records, provide revenue, appoint teachers and fix their salaries, direct what studies shall be taught, adopt a school calendar, employ a superintendent and many more.

Article 10 of *The School Code* also lists the *powers* of school boards in Sections 10-22 and 10-23. Powers represent

the discretionary authority which the legislature delegates to the local board and include such decisions as whether to borrow money, repair buildings, suspend or expel a student, declare special holidays, lease property, and so forth.

Among all the duties and powers of school boards, probably the most important is the duty "to adopt and enforce all necessary rules for the management and government of the public schools of their district." While the legislature over the years has reduced school board discretion by restricting powers and expanding duties, this single duty (Section 10-21.5) gives Illinois school boards the authority they need to oversee the management of their schools by enacting policies which have the force of law. This duty to "adopt and enforce all necessary rules" also imposes on boards the *responsibility* for what goes on in the schools.

Administrative Authority

The School Code also requires that the board of education employ a superintendent "who shall have charge of the administration of the schools" (Section 10-21.4). The superintendent must be appropriately certificated by the State of Illinois (Section 21-7.1). The *Code* spells out certain duties of the superintendent in Section 10-21.4, as follows:

> "In addition to the administrative duties, the superintendent shall make recommendations to the board concerning the budget, building plans, the location of sites, the selection of teachers and other employees, the selection of textbooks, instructional materials and courses of study. The superintendent shall keep or cause to be kept the records and accounts as directed and required by the board, aid in making reports required by the board, and perform such other duties as the board may delegate to him."

It should be noted that while this statute sets forth the minimal responsibilities of the superintendent, it does not convey authority. Authority is conveyed (delegated) by the school board. Thus, the school board cannot avoid responsibility for how its powers are used or misued by saying the superintendent is responsible. This concept of school board responsibility is important in the way that

it affects the board-superintendent relationship. It is through the use of the board's delegated authority that a superintendent is able to administer the schools.

Where the superintendent is delegated insufficient authority, the board will have a weak superintendent. If the superintendent must bring every routine decision to the board, he will not be able to make the day-to-day decisions that are essential in running a school district. Teachers, students, and parents will soon discover that the superintendent is merely a figurehead who has no real voice in how the schools are run.

On the other hand, if the board delegates authority to the superintendent with no guidance on how to use it and never checks to see that he is using it responsibly—then the superintendent probably has too much authority. That situation is equally unfair to the superintendent. It is unfair because the superintendent has no guidelines or directions on how to use school board powers, no way of knowing where he stands, and no way of knowing what the board expects from him. Some superintendents in that situation may be just as weak as the one who is given no authority—they will be afraid to make decisions because they have no school board guidance and no visible board support. The responsible exercise of authority is absolutely essential in the operation of a school district, but unless the board and superintendent have good communications and mutual support, authority will be misused or not used at all.

"Authority" has been defined as freedom to make mistakes. To the extent that any person has the freedom to make an incorrect decision, that person has "authority" over that decision. A board of education should be reasonably clear in specifying the types of decisions for which the superintendent is to have "freedom to be wrong." These are the decisions over which the board is delegating its authority to the superintendent. Such decisions will vary among school districts, depending partly upon size of the administrative staff (expertise available to the superintendent), the amount of confidence that the board has in the superintendent, and the nature of their working relationship. There are, in fact, several categories of decisions:

1) Decisions which the board delegates fully to the superintendent. These are administrative decisions, usually involving little controversy, which the superintendent makes with no communication with the board.

2) Decisions which the superintendent is authorized to make, but which the board ought to be informed about after the fact. These may involve controversy or be interpretations of policy.

3) Decisions on which the superintendent obtains the thinking of the school board. These are still administrative in nature but are major decisions that touch on bigger issues. Controversy or significant policy interpretations may be involved.

4) Decisions which the superintendent brings to the school board for final action. These are policy decisions and should be accompanied by relevant information and staff recommendations.

A good superintendent knows the category where each decision fits—knows which decisions he should make and which ones he should bring to the board. A good school board knows the same thing. In a good board-superintendent relationship, there is a working agreement on which decisions fit in which categories. The superintendent who makes decisions that should be made by the board is obviously courting disaster. The one who brings to the board decisions which he should make himself also may be courting disaster—though not quite so obviously—for he may create inefficiency which the board will eventually recognize.

"Freedom to be wrong," of course, does not imply an absence of responsibility. While the superintendent is not normally held responsible to the state or to the public (that is the board's role), he must be held responsible to the board. It is up to the board, through policies, a job description, and an evaluation process to specify:

1) The decisions, actions, and/or results which the board will examine in holding the superintendent "responsible."

2) The decisions, actions, and/or results over which the superintendent will generally be given a free hand.

From this it should be clear that school boards must be

able to appraise the performance of their superintendents in a constructive and effective manner if they are to delegate proper authority for the administration of school affairs to the superintendent and still maintain their accountability to local citizens and to the state.

Because public schools are governmental institutions with limited resources and powers, they must pursue goals and emphasize values which reflect the will of the general public. The board of education must be closely involved, therefore, as active participants in the management process. This is where the school board differs most markedly from the private sector board of directors.

Figure 1 illustrates the school board's role in articulating community values (through policy) and the importance of evaluation in seeing that those values are reflected in school programs. *Figure 1* also suggests that it is illogical and ineffective to evaluate administrator traits or characteristics while ignoring programs and program results. Also note that policy and evaluation go hand in hand—one is incomplete without the other.

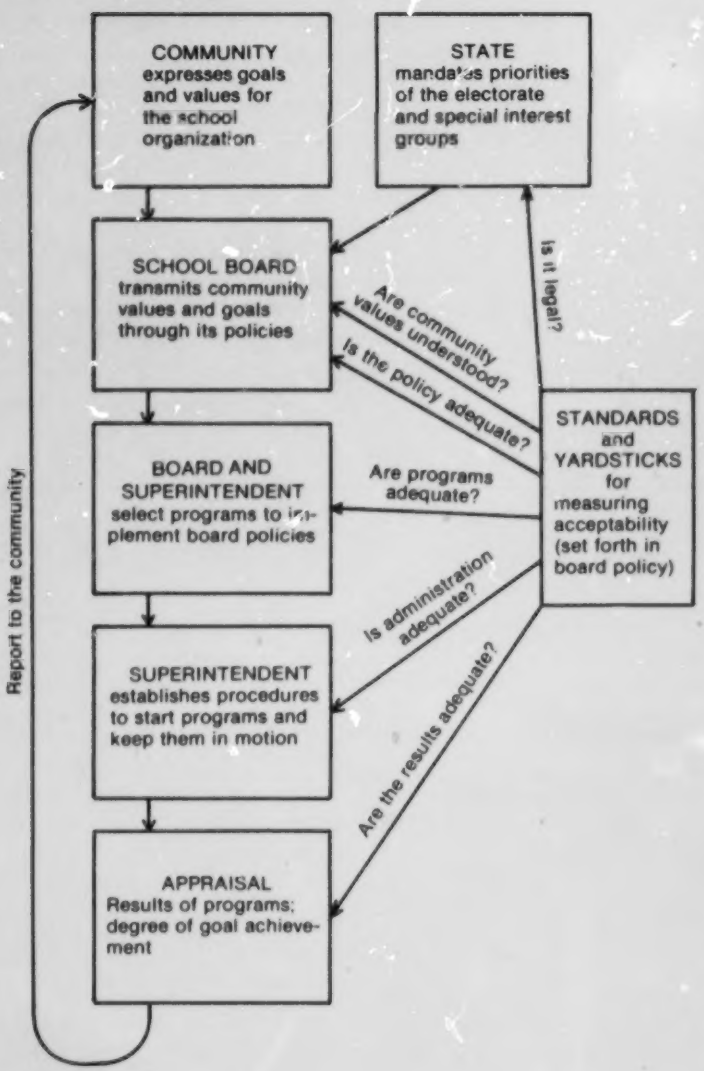
Building a Better Relationship

It is often assumed that the respective roles of the school board and superintendent are somewhere etched in stone. Such an assumption is both untrue and dangerous.

Acting on this erroneous assumption, the school board hires a new superintendent and sits back to wait for something to happen. But contrary to what the board may think, the superintendent is not a mind reader. The superintendent knows what his basic duties are (they are outlined for him in the law). However, he also knows that every district is different and that every school board has its own peculiar expectations. He also knows that the school board sets goals and policies. So he either waits for some directions from the board or he plunges off on some course that may or may not meet with board approval as time passes.

The superintendent, likewise, acts on an erroneous assumption in believing that every school board will adhere to certain standard procedures. True, many boards abide by

Figure 1—The role of policy and evaluation in school management


COMMUNITY
expresses goals and values for the school organization
STATE
mandates priorities of the electorate and special interest groups
SCHOOL BOARD
transmits community values and goals through its policies
Are community values understood?
Is the policy adequate?
Is it legal?
STANDARDS and YARDSTICKS for measuring acceptability (set forth in board policy)
BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT
select programs to implement board policies
Are programs adequate?
Is administration adequate?
SUPERINTENDENT
establishes procedures to start programs and keep them in motion
Are the results adequate?
APPRAISAL
Results of programs; degree of goal achievement
Report to the community

the conventional wisdom which says, "school boards make policy and superintendents implement that policy." However, this distinction in roles is acted out in different ways by different boards and superintendents.

The Superintendent's Plight — Research shows that the average job expectancy of a school superintendent is less than six years and going down. In private industry, management experts believe it takes three to five years for a chief executive to achieve real leadership results. The conclusion, of course, is that education suffers from the high turnover rate among superintendents.

The modern school superintendency ranks among the most vulnerable occupations in the nation—right up there with big league baseball managers. Without a cohesive school board, the superintendent finds himself working for seven bosses and often becomes a readily available target for teacher unions and other pressure groups. The superintendent has to satisfy at least a majority of the school board in order to keep his job. But membership on the board can change rapidly, and even when it doesn't board members have been known to change their minds about what they want.

The School Board's Plight — At one time or another, every school board member is plagued by such questions as: Am I a good school board member? Is our school board doing a good job? How do I know whether our school district is educating children properly and using resources efficiently?

School board members live with increasing amounts of anxiety. When the nation was young, school board members knew first-hand what was going on in the schools because they handled the daily administrative chores. With school consolidation and the subsequent need for professional school management, the role of the board changed. Where once the board had its hands on all administrative decisions, it now moves further and further away from those decisions.

Because the school board is no longer regarded as an administrative body, superintendents who are professionally trained as school managers generally expect board members to stay out of administrative matters. Rather, boards are expected to concentrate their efforts exclusively on the

setting of goals and policies. The problem is that many boards and superintendents make no provision for the board to ask, "How are we doing?" As a consequence, board members go after answers in the only way that's readily apparent by getting personally involved in administrative matters.

No organized body of knowledge exists for school board members to tap when they want to learn how to perform their jobs. They can turn, of course, to the general guidelines available from school board associations. But virtually all school boards must depend on their superintendents for information about what their schools are doing. The board members who lack confidence in the superintendent commonly turn to personal inspections and direct involvement in administrative affairs to reassure themselves. And where the board-superintendent relationship is based mainly on blind trust, the relationship is vulnerable in a time of crisis. The board will fire the superintendent as a way to alleviate the anxiety that accompanies a lack of confidence in his performance.

The wise superintendent recognizes the board members' need for clearly defined roles and for relevant information on which to base decisions. Role clarification, policy setting, and appraisal enable board members to properly sustain their part in the board-superintendent relationship.

Legal Obligations

A good relationship for the board and superintendent to strive for is one in which both parties understand their respective rights and duties. As stated earlier, the statutes place only a few restrictions on the relationship. But the statutes, along with some related court decisions, do provide a foundation on which to build a relationship which meets the needs of each particular school district. The board and superintendent, therefore, must understand the relevant laws.

Stated briefly, here are the obligations which the statutes place on the Illinois school board:

1) Except in very tiny school districts, the board must

employ a superintendent who meets the qualifications required by the State of Illinois.

2) The board must enter into a contract with the superintendent. The contract may be for one year or three years. A two-year contract is permissable when the person employed is serving as a superintendent for the first time in Illinois. (See Section 10-23.8 of *The School Code.*)

3) Unless the contract specifies otherwise, notice of intention not to renew a contract (annual or multi-year) must be given by April 1 of the year in which the contract expires. If notice is not given, the contract automatically extends for one more year. This notice not to renew applies to both the board and the superintendent.

4) A superintendent working under a series of one-year contracts acquires tenure *in the district* after two years. This does not mean that the individual acquires tenure as superintendent. It does mean, however, that the individual cannot be removed from the district without going through the tenure dismissal procedures set forth in Sections 24-11 and 24-12 of *The School Code.* Unless the individual is dismissed through these procedures, he is entitled to continued professional employment in a position for which he is qualified. A superintendent employed on a multi-year contract acquires no rights of tenure (although he probably retains tenure if he had previously acquired it in the district).

5) Any superintendent whose contract is not being renewed is entitled to certain procedural considerations. The procedures include: a) notice of nonrenewal by April 1, unless the contract specifically provides otherwise; b) the notice must include a statement of the reasons for the nonrenewal; c) if requested within 10 days after receiving the notice, the superintendent is entitled to a hearing before the school board.

6) Dismissal (or demotion) during the term of a contract requires sufficient cause (e.g., breach of contract) and thorough due process procedures. The superintendent's contract creates a property interest, meaning that the superintendent is entitled to receive the benefits provided for in the contract, such as salary, unless the board demonstrates that, because of incompetency, insubordination, negligence,

etc., the superintendent is not fulfilling his obligations under the contract.

The statutory obligations of superintendents in Illinois are set forth in Section 10-21.4 of *The School Code*. As explained earlier, these obligations or duties include keeping records, preparing reports, making recommendations to the school board on various key decisions, and administration of the schools "under the direction of the board of education." These obligations are very broadly stated. To examine the superintendent's obligations in greater detail, one must look to the superintendent's contract, job description, and board policies—if such documents exist in the district.

In order to be fair to both the school board and the superintendent, the contract should set forth the obligations of both parties. The Illinois Association of School Boards suggests that the following items are essential for a sound contractual relationship:

1) Term of employment (one year or three years).
2) Duties of the superintendent. The contract may, by reference, incorporate the written job description.
3) Salary.
4) Evaluation procedures.
5) Statement that the superintendent must be properly certificated, as required by law.
6) State whether outside work may be accepted by the superintendent, such as writing, lecturing, or consulting, and if so under what conditions.
7) Clarify the rights and obligations of both parties in the event the superintendent becomes disabled.
8) State whether the superintendent is encouraged (or required) to take part in educational programs to keep up-to-date with his profession.
9) Set forth procedures for handling complaints, criticisms, and suggestions brought to the attention of individual board members.
10) State that the superintendent's failure to perform duties or to meet other terms of the contract is cause for dismissal.
11) The date by which notice of nonrenewal must be given and the manner in which notice of dismissal

will be given.

12) Other optional clauses include vacation and sick leave, insurance benefits, membership dues in professional organizations, and other fringe benefits.

The contract, of course, is usually negotiated at the time that the superintendent is first hired. Mutually acceptable modifications can be made when the contract is renewed.

In order for the school board's expectations for the superintendent to have the weight of law, they must be stated in writing—particularly those expectations which go beyond the minimum duties set forth in the law (Section 10-21.4). That is why the job description and board policies are important adjuncts to the contract. If the superintendent is to be evaluated and if the superintendent's continued employment is to be based on that evaluation, then it is essential that the evaluation procedures be stated in writing. Otherwise, any decision the board makes based on the evaluation is open to legal challenge as being arbitrary or capricious.

3/An introduction to appraisal

What Can School Boards Evaluate?

Every school board wants to know whether the school district's administrative needs are being met. Administrative needs vary among districts, of course. In a very small district, the role of the superintendent is quite different from that in a large district. However, in every district the administration is delegated authority for day-to-day operations.

Because the scope of the superintendent's job is usually so broad, appraisal of his performance raises many complicated questions. Do we, for example, judge his performance on the basis of student test scores? A balanced budget? Popularity among the staff or community? His friendliness toward members of the school board? What if our superintendent appears to be highly capable, but our schools seem to be going down hill? Conversely, what if he appears personally ineffectual, but our school district is sailing smoothly and getting better?

School boards can reduce this confusion by resolving to identify the administrative needs of their own particular districts. Boards which pick up checklists or evaluation criteria from other school districts never eliminate the confusion, for they never think through their own needs. *The most important part of appraisal is to determine precisely what it is that you wish to appraise.* The school board and the superintendent must sit down together and sort through the multitude of possible factors that signify success or failure in school management. Then they must agree on those factors which represent the board's expectations for the superintendent and serve as the criteria upon which they will judge his performance. Then both the board and the superintendent will be fully aware of what the board considers important (and unimportant). Neither should find surprises in the appraisal process.

Any evaluation system, including the evaluation of the superintendent, needs certain basic requirements.

1) School district goals—do they tell the superintendent where the board and community want the district to go educationally, financially, etc? Are the goals consistent with state and federal laws? Does the board understand and support the goals?
2) School board policies—are they consistent with the goals and do they tell the superintendent the intentions of the board on all key matters?
3) Job description—does it tell the superintendent what his responsibilities are?
4) Performance criteria—does the superintendent know the standards that he is expected to meet? Do they reflect fully the expectations of the school board?
5) Appraisal procedures—do the board and superintendent know the steps involved?

Before they can develop these essential ingredients for evaluation, the school board and the superintendent must first reach a meeting of the minds on three key matters:

1) They must agree on the nature of the board-superintendent relationship and the reasonable expectations of one for the other. Without this, misunderstandings as to the respective roles of the board and the superintendent will occur frequently.
2) They must clearly state the purposes of evaluation. What do the board and the superintendent expect evaluation to accomplish? Their answers to this question will shape the process itself.
3) They must decide what and how to evaluate. Will evaluation be based on characteristics which are personal (e.g., attitude) or professional (delegates authority)? Will it be based on individual performance (keeps the board informed) or school district performance (balanced budget)?

Because different districts have different needs, no single evaluation system is appropriate for all. Certain principles of management, however, apply to all school organizations—or can be modified to apply.

Although differences among school districts are often as much imagined as real, there are some legitimate distinctions that must be recognized:

1) The role of the superintendent varies among school districts. In a small district, the superintendent is probably expected to be an expert in school finance and to spend a lot of time on financial matters. In a larger district, he probably has a business manager to perform that function, and the board may expect him to spend a lot of time on curriculum, public relations, or some other function.
2) Not all school boards work alike, nor do all board members think alike. Differences in priorities and role perceptions are just two of the many variables that can distinguish one school board from another.
3) Individuals who serve as superintendents possess a wide variety of personal characteristics. They vary by years and kinds of experience, training, personality, emotional stability, intelligence, management style, and numerous other factors.

One obviously cannot assume that the role of the superintendent is the same in all districts. If evaluation is to bear any relationship to the actual duties of the superintendent, the process must be tailored to fit each school district. An evaluation system should not be selected "off the rack" in the way one picks a suit of clothes.

Evaluation Methods

Basically, there are two popular systems for evaluating the superintendent—and a multitude of variations thereof. Some variations are quite simple and some are highly complex; some rely entirely on the subjective judgements of board members, while others make use of factual information and give at least the impression of microscopic precision. A good overview of what is happening nationwide is presented in the ERS Report, *Evaluating Superintendents and School Boards* (1976), available for $10 from Educational Research Service, Inc., 1815 North Fort Myer Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22209.

Figure 2—Trait-centered rating scale

CHARACTERISTIC	SCALE				
Job knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
Judgment	1	2	3	4	5
Organizing ability	1	2	3	4	5
Attitude	1	2	3	4	5
Dependability	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Dealing with people	1	2	3	4	5
Delegation	1	2	3	4	5
Leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Personal efficiency	1	2	3	4	5

Figure 3—Rating scale oriented to function and style

FUNCTION	SCALE				
1) Keeps the school board informed on issues, needs, and operations of the school system.	1	2	3	4	5
2) Delegates authority to staff members appropriate to the position each holds.	1	2	3	4	5
3) Evaluates financial needs and makes recommendations for adequate financing.	1	2	3	4	5
4) Interprets and executes the intent of board policy.	1	2	3	4	5

Most evaluation systems probably work—at least in the school districts where they originated. However, they all probably create frustration for school boards that borrow them without really considering local needs.

The challenge facing the school board is to examine all the possibilities, determine what the district needs, and then select an evaluation process that will work.

Checklists and rating scales are by far the most common devices used in evaluation.

Figure 2 shows a scale for rating various traits—such as judgement and creativity. *Figure 3* shows a similar instrument used to rate more specific activities or functions.

Although the former is more obviously trait-oriented, the latter also deals with how the superintendent functions rather than with his effectiveness or results.

Checklists with rating scales are popular because they are fast, impersonal, and often give the appearance of exactness.

Rating scales call for personal judgement by the evaluator and are, therefore, used to gather opinions regarding traits, abilities, and behaviors. Checklists and rating scales serve useful purposes in identifying problems and opening up board-superintendent communications. However, boards that want to look seriously at school district results and administrative performance find such scales woefully deficient.

In rating a superintendent's traits or behaviors, most instruments require board members to make subjective (personal) judgements and to translate these judgements into some kind of rating or score. For example, how might a board determine whether a superintendent possesses goal-setting skills? How might that same board communicate to the superintendent how it feels about those skills? The board would assign some kind of score (perhaps on a scale of 1 to 5) or rate the skills as "excellent"...or "good"... or "average"... or "poor."

There are, therefore, many weaknesses in the evaluation and rating of characteristics. For example:

1) They tend to consist largely of personal judgements or feelings for which there may or may not be a factual basis. Such judgements are easily influenced by personal feelings toward the superintendent.
2) There is no agreement on the meaning of such ratings as "excellent" or "average." Different people mean different things when they apply such terms.
3) Just because a person possesses a skill or some other characteristic is no guarantee that the person will exercise that skill. A superintendent may possess great communications skills, for example, but never take the time to use them. Or the board may place a low priority on communictions.
4) Scores are misleading. What does it mean when the

superintendent gets a high score on 49 out of 50 items? Can that one low score outweigh the other 49? It should not be assumed that all items on a checklist are equal in importance.

School boards which elect to base superintendent appraisal on characteristics will find several categories with which to deal:

1) Personal traits (expresses feelings, likes people)
2) Skills (able to organize work)
3) Knowledge (finance, law)
4) Style (involves staff, makes decisions without delay)

A common objection to evaluating traits and skills like these is that they reflect the person's *suitability* for being a superintendent. They do not look at *effectiveness or results.* A person who does not possess the proper personal traits, skills, knowledge, and style probably would never acquire a superintendency in the first place—or shouldn't. A person who does possess such characteristics to a satisfactory degree will get the same score year after year.

Conceivably it is possible to write a checklist that looks at results. However, the authors have been unable to find such an instrument—possibly because the items on such an instrument would have to be written in the form of specific objectives. For example:

> The superintendent provides the school board with information that is adequate to make sound financial decisions and to maintain a balanced budget.

A checklist made up of objectives like the above would be endless. Moreover, unless the checklist is specially tailored for each district, it probably would require the superintendent to accomplish some tasks that are inappropriate or even impossible. Checklists, as the name suggests, are intended to cover just about everything. That probably explains why checklists typically deal with characteristics of the superintendent rather than the responsibilities of the job.

Boards that limit superintendent appraisal to a checklist should expect it to serve only as an indicator of basic abili-

ties or as a way to educate board members about the superintendency.

Written objectives represent the other approach to superintendent appraisal which is gaining in popularity because of its orientation toward results and future growth. Most such systems are derived from the widely-heralded system called "management by objectives" or MBO.

Stated briefly, MBO is a management system in which all decision makers set down in writing what they are going to do, how, by when, and how they'll measure the results. The process requires all the managers in an organization to pursue common goals and to identify each person's responsibilities in that pursuit.

A few school districts have adopted MBO as a total management system. This means that the board sets forth its objectives for the year, and these are translated into objectives for the superintendent, the management team, and teachers in the classroom. The board must concur with the superintendent's objectives, who in turn must concur with the objectives of other administrators, and so on down through the organization.

Properly written objectives contain both deadlines for completion and measures for determining the superintendent's success or failure.

A typical objective might be:

> To organize an evaluation team for comparing the current curriculum with district goals, as evidenced by a written report with recommendations to the board no later than March 15, 1980.

Writing and using such objectives, of course, is not as easy as it sounds. Nor are objectives always easy for the school board to deal with. In the above example, the board is apparently left to its own devices in judging the quality of the resulting curriculum report and the utility of the recommendations. It is essential to note, however, that the objective does stimulate action.

Probably the major pitfalls in using objectives in appraisal are these:

1) Unless the school board has its own clear goals and policies, objectives can only reflect the superintendent's perceptions of what he should be doing.

2) Objectives can be too philosophical and speculative at the one extreme or too preoccupied with trivia at the other. The impact of a philosophical objective probably can't be measured. The trivial objective may lend itself to precise measurement—but so what?

3) Playing with objectives can become an end in itself, particularly for those board members and superintendents who enjoy mental gymnastics. The central purpose—to evaluate—can get shunted aside.

Performance Appraisal

Somewhere between the rating scale and pure MBO lies the answer to the appraisal needs of most school boards. Of course, a board that wants to function in a custodial capacity can get along adequately by routinely endorsing objectives prepared by the superintendent. And the board that cannot bring itself to delegate management authority is probably limited to reviewing the superintendent's personal traits and behaviors.

School boards that want to function as policy makers with a full-fledged manager in the superintendent's chair, however, can expect frustration from exclusive reliance on either a rating scale or list of objectives.

The appraisal of performance does not require ratings or scores, although checklists of traits and behaviors can be very helpful in identifying school board concerns. By the same token, performance appraisal does not call for written objectives for every task that falls under the superintendent's purview. But such objectives can be important aids in clarifying the board's expectations.

Rather, performance appraisal should apply the best ideas associated with both trait-centered systems and management by objectives. The product is an appraisal process that focuses primarily on the results that the superintendent gets in any or all areas of concern to the school board.

Stated simply, performance appraisal requires the school board to determine:

1) What are the superintendent's job responsibilities?

2) Is the superintendent fulfilling each of those responsibilities?

Stated another way: In performance appraisal, the school board evaluates the superintendent's results in reaching agreed-upon goals, solving agreed-upon problems, and making agreed-upon improvements.

There is no need for ratings; the aim is simply to determine whether the superintendent is accomplishing what the board wants him to accomplish. The advantages of results-oriented appraisal are:

1) The superintendent has a standard of evaluation based on special characteristics of his own job, jointly agreed upon with his board.
2) It emphasizes the future—which can be changed—not the past.
3) By forward planning, it clarifies responsibilities, organizes jobs, and corrects problems in advance.
4) It shifts the board from merely criticizing to helping the superintendent improve.
5) It allows for the non-conformist who gets results with unconventional methods.
6) It increases the superintendent's control over his environment and reduces his dependency on the board.
7) It gives the school board a positive and constructive means for guiding the school district by linking evaluation with the total management system.

Pitfalls in Appraisal

Because it involves assessment of human abilities and frailties, appraisal is a sensitive and often traumatic process for all parties. For this reason, the greatest and most common appraisal error is avoidance; boards are uncomfortable with the process, so they avoid doing it at all. They rationalize that "things are all right," "no problems," "no time to do it," "we forget," etc., until problems surface or the relationship breaks down. These errors of omission in evaluation are irresponsible and cannot be justified at any level of an organization that expects to accomplish specific goals. Boards of education are derelict in their duty if they do not

systematically evaluate their chief executive officer, the entire school district operation, and even their own policies and practices.

Those who do evaluate, regardless of the system used, commonly make the following errors:

1) Evaluate in a vacuum without understanding what is expected—where are we going (goals), and how do we get there (objectives).

2) Try to measure performance without standards. Doing something takes precedence over how well it has been done.

3) Evaluate without understanding the job being evaluated—its functions and responsibilities. We have no description of the job and only a "feel" for what it encompasses. Organizations that have a lot of titles and organizational charts but do not define job responsibilities make this error.

4) Assume that evaluators are pseudo-psychologists and are able to evaluate personal relationships, mental health, interests, desires, etc. In reality, boards can only evaluate whether a job is being done and how well it is being done.

5) Assume that the longer and more complicated the forms, the better the system. This is usually an attempt to use volume to cover up inadequate standards.

6) Assume that evaluation should never be used for reward or discipline, but only for development.

By making these errors in appraisal, the evaluator may unintentionally reward the undeserving, fail to recognize real performance, and do a disservice to the organization.

4/Selecting an appraisal process

Determining District Needs

School boards are in varying degrees of readiness for appraisal. Some, of course, have already installed systems for evaluating their superintendents. Others are actively seeking a system that looks workable.

In some districts, board members are thinking about appraisal, but are unwilling to bring the subject up for discussion because communication with the superintendent isn't very good.

School boards that presently do nothing to formally evaluate their superintendents, but now plan to get into it, will have to decide precisely what they want to accomplish. Many boards go into appraisal and come away disappointed, feeling that the process is a waste of time and that they aren't really accomplishing anything. The mistake that such boards make is that their aims for appraisal greatly exceed the capacity of the methods they use. A board that wants to see some improvement in education or school management can not rely on a checklist of personal traits or skills. No checklist by itself is capable of producing planned or purposeful change.

A checklist can help a board and superintendent identify problems that need solving, particularly if those problems are related to behavior, traits, skills, or routine responsibilities. A checklist can get discussion started where the board and superintendent are not accustomed to telling one another candidly about their concerns and beliefs.

School boards that use checklists (or plan to) should examine the results they're getting. Does the process generate open discussion between the board and superintendent? Does it produce change in the superintendent's behavior and/or performance or in board practices? If the rating of superintendent traits and behaviors doesn't produce results,

the board is probably dissatisfied with it.

The answer lies in using the checklist as a springboard for discussion and planning improvements. That is, rather than simply giving the superintendent a score or rating of "fair, average, or excellent," the board should tell the superintendent as specifically as possible what its concerns are. A board member who believes there is a particular problem should explain it. Discussing the matter may reveal that there is no problem after all. If there is a problem, the superintendent will probably be grateful someone told him. More importantly, the board and superintendent can agree on a solution. This activity is an important step toward performance appraisal.

School boards face a special problem in evaluating the superintendent. Board members spend relatively little time in direct contact with the superintendent or in direct contact with the schools. Board members can't begin to imagine all the possible items on which the superintendent might be evaluated, because they may not even be aware of the hundreds of routine administrative tasks he handles or supervises.

So how does a school board decide what to evaluate and how to evaluate it?

The answer to that question lies in what the school board wants to accomplish through appraisal. Different boards have different expectations, of course, but the majority of boards want appraisal to accomplish one or all of the following:

1) Appraisal should open communications among board members and the superintendent. For one thing, people should be able to speak openly without fear of reprisal so that little problems won't grow into large ones. Moreover, school board members have no idea what it's like to be a superintendent, and only a few understand the principles of managing a large, formal organization of people. By the same token, superintendents rarely appreciate what it's like to be a board member. Open communication that creates better understanding of roles, responsibilities, and daily pressures should be a major aim of appraisal.

2) Appraisal should identify those problems in district

operations or performance or behavior which a superintendent must correct in order to meet reasonable school board expectations. This does not mean the board should expect to dictate to the superintendent how to run the schools or how to dress or act in public. But the fact remains, the superintendent cannot be secure in his job unless all members of the board (or nearly all) feel comfortable in the knowledge that the district is well-managed.

3) A good appraisal system enables the board and superintendent to chart a course for the school district and enables the board to hold the superintendent accountable for following that course. An appraisal system which accomplishes this purpose represents a key part of the management process, because it links the school board to conceivably everything that happens in the district.

4) Appraisal should produce a written record that serves as a defense against critics of the superintendent, school board, or district in general.

Performance appraisal systems that meet all of these criteria take time and substantial effort to install. In the long run, however, they save time and worry. A good appraisal system is an alternative for the board member who wants to check up on the superintendent by following him around all day or dealing directly with staff members. All board members can rest more easily knowing that the superintendent is doing his job.

A few boards have been disappointed with performance appraisal. They say they can't find a way to measure results. Or they say that the responsibilities of the superintendent are such that only trivial things can be measured. Careful examination usually shows that such boards become too engrossed in the process of writing and analyzing objectives. They lose sight of what they really want to accomlish—which probably include items one through four listed above.

A school board that goes from no appraisal at all directly into the writing of performance objectives for the superintendent without careful thought and planning will be disappointed. The board and superintendent first must go through a process of:

1) Getting to know one another;
2) Eliminating minor differences of opinion and petty gripes;
3) Defining their respective roles and responsibilities;
4) Identifying strengths and weaknesses in both behavior and performance (results);
5) Planning improvements;
6) Analyzing results of improvement plans.

An appraisal system that skips the first two or three items will probably get off on the wrong foot and miss entirely some of the major benefits of the process. For example, how can the board examine strengths and weaknesses until it has clarified exactly what the superintendent is supposed to do? How can a board member deal dispassionately with the superintendent's effectiveness in financial planning when—deep down—the board member is more concerned with the superintendent's antisocial behavior?

A good appraisal process does not dwell on the routine or the trivial—but neither does it overlook anything that might be important to board members. The difficult task of analyzing responsibilities and performance requires good, positive communication. Small matters must be dealt with early, both to clear the air and to see whether significant problems lie beneath the surface.

The school board can appraise the superintendent's performance without focusing on routine items (did the tax levy get filed on time?) or on personal traits (is the superintendent courageous?). The answer lies in a free discussion of what board members think and feel and what the school board wants the superintendent to accomplish. The aims of most school boards cannot be achieved by handing the superintendent a report card, even if every item on the card is subjected to face-to-face discussion.

Measuring Results

Finding an appraisal process that offers adequate ways to measure performance will be a problem for some boards. The more a manager is free to make decisions, the less chance that the job can be accurately itemized, specified,

or categorized. This certainly applies to the school superintendent who is expected to function as a manager under a policy-making board. Other than directions provided in his job description and board policies, the superintendent depends largely upon his own judgement in making dozens of decisions that reach his desk each day. (Even with input from other people, the buck stops with the superintendent. He is responsible to the board for the quality of the final decision.)

If the job of the superintendent cannot be "itemized or categorized," how can board members hope to put an accurate measure on the quality of his performance? The superintendent, in his role as supervisor, can rely on daily observations to evaluate many of his employees. The school board's opportunities for first-hand observation of the superintendent are limited to board meetings, visits to the central office, and a few other similar settings.

The fact is that boards cannot expect to measure with precision everything that the superintendent does. For example, suppose that the board and superintendent agree that district administrators need to make greater use of modern management techniques. They will, of course, want to attach some indicator of success or failure to such a project. One way is for the superintendent to adopt an objective to the effect that all members of the administrative staff will attend five management seminars during the coming year. Or, that a consultant will be employed to study and report on the district's management system by July 1. These are precisely measurable objectives. However, even though seminars and consultants may be quite worthwhile, such objectives don't measure results, and many board members find them trivial and frustrating.

A more effective approach is for the board to adopt a policy that expresses what it wants in terms of management planning, reporting, evaluation, etc. Then the board and superintendent can discuss the current status of management procedures and agree on what needs to be improved. From this discussion, the superintendent can draw up objectives that specify what improvements will be made and by when. The board, of course, should concur in the ob-

jectives. When it comes time to evaluate the superintendent, the board may not be able to employ a precise yardstick. But, if members of the board enjoy mutual trust with the superintendent, they can—through discussion and documentation—satisfy themselves that progress is being made. A board member who isn't satisfied should continue asking questions. Perhaps the board member would need greater details, including some minutes of an administrative cabinet meeting to be sure that each administrator has adopted some appropriate objectives. Or, see a new accounting form if program budgeting is a part of those objectives.

The precision required in measuring results may depend upon how much the board and superintendent trust one another. But a board member should resolve all inner doubts as to the superintendent's relative success or failure in meeting objectives or expectations. It is in the long-run best interests of the superintendent to take the initiative to see that such doubts are resolved.

On the other hand, some aspects of the superintendent's job do lend themselves to reasonably accurate measurement, depending upon how the board expresses its expectations and what the board and superintendent agree is both fair and appropriate. For example, student reading levels might serve as criteria for certain objectives. So might a public opinion poll, a negotiated salary settlement with the union, the number of parents attending a school open house, and so on. In selecting some way to measure effectiveness, however, the board should not be so dedicated to exactness that it overlooks fairness and appropriateness. Many of the things that board members desire may prove unreasonable or inappropriate as measures of performance.

For example, the board cannot reasonably "demand" improvements in student achievement unless it is able to provide the necessary resources—namely, funds and changes in parental attitudes. By the same token, increases in student achievement scores may occur without any particular effort by the superintendent or the faculty.

In other words, boards should select an appraisal process that examines the superintendent's effectiveness in terms of both his responsibilities and the constraints that limit his

activities (time, laws, finances, board policies, etc.).

Deciding What to Evaluate and How

School boards getting into superintendent appraisal for the first time soon discover that they cannot evaluate everything about the superintendent or the superintendent's job. Many aspects of the job are so routine that it proves pointless to spend time debating the exact degree of success or failure. It is helpful, therefore, to make some distinctions in how to assess different facets of the superintendency.

For one thing, boards should distinguish between *responsibilities* of the job and *characteristics* of the individual. Evaluation systems which focus on characteristics of the individual (traits and behaviors) usually employ some sort of rating scale to grade the superintendent. As suggested earlier, this can be a useful process if the board understands that such ratings are highly subjective and if the rating scale or checklist serves as a basis for discussion. Recognize also, however, that no checklist can anticipate all the concerns that board members might have. The discussion should be open ended.

The board and superintendent probably do not have the time to analyze in detail every item on a list of characteristics. Nor will they have time to discuss every routine administrative responsibility. (How much time should you devote to discussing the manner in which the superintendent files reports with the state education department?)

The fact is, boards probably should not spend time evaluating such tasks at all—*unless they have some reason to believe that a task is not being handled properly.*

The responsibilities of the superintendent can be divided into several categories. If a board could view in writing—perhaps in a job description—all of the responsibilities of the superintendent, it would find that some of those responsibilities represent minimal expectations for success. These the superintendent must perform if the district is to operate lawfully. Minimal expectations might include: preparation of a school calendar for board adoption; completion and filing on time of all required forms and reports; preparation of the

annual budget, and the like. These functions are extremely numerous and—if the superintendent is competent and the board knows it—they will rarely become the subject of evaluation.

This is where the board applies the principles of *management by exception*, which means that the board examines a particular administrative function only when a problem—or exception—arises. If the annual budget turns out to be an annual mess or if the tax levy doesn't get filed, these become exceptions and the objects of board discussion. If the purpose of appraisal is to bring about improvement and resolve problems, then the purpose of management by exception is to identify those problems that need solving and practices that need improving. The same approach applies to the evaluation of personal characteristics. If people in the community are saying that the superintendent boasts too much or that he criticizes board members in public, then these are things the board will want to discuss with him. But they are not things you'll find on any checklist, and a rating of "good or poor or fair" wouldn't solve the problem anyway.

Thus, the board can use management by exception to both monitor the routine responsibilities of the job and deal with the behavior of the individual holding that job. All management by exception really means is that the board deals with those things that cause concern. A checklist can be viewed as an aid in this respect, but it should not prohibit discussion of concerns that are not on the list.

Superintendents—at least in most districts—are entrusted with responsibilities that go beyond the minimal ones. These are responsibilities that move the district forward and enable it to meet changing needs and new challenges, such as collective bargaining and declining enrollments.

It is reasonable to expect the superintendent to lead the school district forward—but the board must be careful in defining "reasonable." What is reasonable in one district is unreasonable in another. One board may feel that the superintendent leads them in community relations simply by being a friendly person. Another board may require a

comprehensive planned communications program. Also, reasonable expectations will change as the times change and the board faces new challenges. What's reasonable depends upon district needs and resources and how much the board can reasonably pile on the superintendent, keeping in mind that he still has all those other duties to manage and keeping in mind how many assistants he has to help him.

Reasonable expectations of the superintendent reflect the board's priorities and, therefore, should represent the central focus of performance appraisal. Here is where appraisal can help the board and superintendent focus on improvement and on the future. Much evaluation tends to dwell on past mistakes and past glories. But the real value of the process lies in what it can do for the school district's future.

Appraisal turns toward the future when it employs some principles of *management by objectives* in establishing courses of action and monitoring progress. From among the school board's goals, reasonable expectations can be established for the superintendent. The board can select priorities and authorize written objectives which specify what is to be done, who is to do it, by what deadline, and how the extent of success or failure will be measured.

This process will not provide the superintendent with a grade or a report card, but it will place emphasis on things which are truly important to the school district—at least in the eyes of the school board members.

The distinction between minimal and reasonable expectations for the superintendent will be explored more fully in Chapter Seven, Establishing School Board Standards.

5/A performance appraisal system for school boards

Many board members claim that schools should be more businesslike, meaning a better control of costs—more efficiency. They also should be demanding effectiveness, because the basic problem of school management is not so much high cost as it is a lack of visible or provable results. Most school superintendents are very efficient in what they do; the question is, are they doing the right things? Are they performing up to the limits of their resources? Boards must determine their priorities before they can appraise the effectiveness of their schools or their chief executives.

Through the performance appraisal process, the school board determines whether the district and its management are effective in meeting the board's goals through implementing its written policies and plans. Lacking such explicit statements of intent (goals and policies), no board can evaluate performance or effectiveness. Without knowing what the superintendent is supposed to do, it is impossible to evaluate how effectively he is doing it.

Before the board considers a new system of management based on performance, it must take a critical look at the entire organization—its structure, priorities, and people. The goals and key problems of the organization need to be identified. When identified, they can yield performance *priorities* from which the board and superintendent can develop performance *outcomes* (results desired). The expected outcomes should produce dialogue throughout the organization and yield objectives at other levels culminating in performance commitments within the entire organization. These three ingredients—priorities, outcomes, and commitments—form the basis for evaluating the performance of all employees at all levels of the organization.

Essential Elements in Performance Appraisal

A school board that decides to adopt a performance appraisal process for evaluating its superintendent must be very certain that it really does want to appraise performance. The process will raise many questions about how well the board performs its own job and about the overall operations of the district. At the outset, therefore, the board should sit down with the superintendent and discuss the following:

1) How do we want the superintendent to function? Is this board willing to function in a policy making capacity and to delegate authority for school management to the superintendent?
2) Can we express in written policies and job descriptions what this board wants from its employees?
3) If we expect the superintendent to provide "leadership," can we find the words to tell him what we mean?

A board that answers these questions in the affirmative would be well advised to proceed with performance appraisal. Without some form of evaluation, the board will be hard-pressed to perform its own responsibilities and still let the superintendent have management authority.

Actually, performance appraisal is part of a larger process of analysis and planning. There are certain kinds of information that the board and superintendent must have in order to determine what to evaluate. Summarized very briefly, here is an analysis and planning process that can lead toward performance appraisal:

1) **Determine what the school board** expects the school district and its employees to accomplish. These expectations should be:

a) Based on state laws, community values, and advice of the professional staff. (Look again at *Figure 1* on page 20.)
b) Expressed in writing as school board goals. Illinois school boards should already have adequate goals developed for the Program Plan required by the State Board of Education. Such goals need to be updated regularly, of course.

2) Determine how the school district presently uses its financial and human resources to pursue the school board's goals. Such information is available from the following, if they exist in the district:

a) School board policy manual;
b) Superintendent's job description;
c) Long-range planning documents;
d) Organization charts.

If such documents are not already available, they will have to be developed. Performance cannot be appraised if the school board doesn't know what its priorities are. Subsequent sections of this handbook offer assistance, as does the accompanying workbook.

3) Clarify the respective roles of the school board and superintendent in relation to the board's priorities. *Figure 4* (pages 48-49) presents a list of typical management functions which support typical school district goals. One of the most rewarding activities any board and superintendent can jointly undertake is to analyze their respective roles in each of the management functions. (The workbook available to accompany this handbook contains a number of exercises designed to accomplish this joint analysis.)

4) Identify problems in the superintendent's performance and practices that need improving. A checklist can help determine the existence of any traits or behaviors that need improvement. The board also must determine whether there are any discrepancies between its desires for the district and what the district is actually doing (educationally, financially, etc.).

5) When the board and superintendent have agreed upon a list of things that need to be changed, improved, or accomplished, they must then arrange them in a priority order.

6) For the top priority items, objectives should be written, setting forth who will do what and by when.

7) At some appointed time in the future, the board and superintendent should review progress toward objectives. This is where the board learns whether the superintendent did what he said he would and if not, why not.

Figure 4—School district functions and management responsibilities

Management responsibilities can probably be categorized in many different ways. Here they are broken down into eight school district functions. Under each function is listed a series of tasks which represent management responsibilities.

SCHOOL BOARD OPERATIONS

1) District goal development
2) Policy development
3) Procedures for organization, decision making, and meetings
4) Employment and evaluation of superintendent
5) Monitoring school district performance

DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

1) Assessment of district needs and development of goals and objectives
2) Development of management and leadership skills
3) Organization of staff and assignment of responsibilities
4) Appraisal of staff performance
5) Evaluation of programs
6) Communication with school board

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

1) Compliance with legal requirements
2) Community needs and aspirations
3) Research and development
4) Curriculum planning
5) Program standards and evaluation
6) Grade-level articulation and departmental coordination
7) Basic skills development
8) Special programs for vocational, handicapped, gifted, enrichment, etc.
9) Extra-curricular programs
10) Grading and reporting
11) Alternative programs

BUDGET/FINANCE

1) Development of revenue sources
2) Budget development based on program priorities
3) Accounting and control procedures
4) Purchasing
5) Auditing
6) Long-range forecasting

Figure 4 continued

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

1) Written employment policies and procedures
2) Job descriptions
3) Recruitment and selection of employees
4) Training and development of staff
5) Compensation
6) Evaluation
7) Collective bargaining
8) Contract administration

PUPIL SERVICES

1) Guidance and counseling
2) Psychological, social, and health services
3) Records
4) Discipline

SUPPORT OPERATIONS

1) Facilities planning and development
2) Plant operations
3) Buildings and grounds maintenance
4) Transportation
5) Food services
6) Office managment

COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC RELATIONS

1) Community attitudes and opinions
2) Management information
3) Staff communications
4) Public information
5) Citizen involvement in decisions
6) Community services
7) Staff training
8) Special projects
9) Program evaluation

Some Essential Materials

Performance appraisal presents few difficulties for the school board that already has clear goals, a comprehensive policy manual, and a job description for the superintendent. Such a board probably knows what it wants and won't be strained to define the superintendent's responsibilities.

The board that presently functions in a custodial or lay-administrative capacity—that is, without goals or policies—faces additional work. In order to adopt any form of performance appraisal, such a board must shift into a policy-making mode and begin by making policies to govern the management of the district. The board will find it impossible to properly arrange its priorities for appraisal without the following documents:

1) **Goals or priorities** which reflect community aspirations and state requirements. These goals tell the board and superintendent where the district is headed educationally and fiscally.

2) **A job description** for the superintendent which sets forth his performance responsibilities. These responsibilities should reflect the superintendent's role as chief executive and the board's expectations of him. The job description should be reviewed regularly to reflect new conditions and needs.

3) **A written procedure** on superintendent appraisal which clearly specifies:

- The purposes of the appraisal—what it is expected to accomplish.
- How the board and superintendent will determine what to appraise; that is, how they will identify problems and priorities that require attention during the coming year.
- The procedure that will be followed, including a timetable for appraisal meetings, methods of documentation and follow-up, and the manner in which appraisal will be tied to compensation and reemployment.

The role of these three documents is simple but essential. They identify what will be evaluated and tell how the evaluation will be carried out. Actually, the appraisal process itself is pretty straightforward and doesn't require a lot of time.

Developing the groundwork and making the decisions leading up to appraisal are another matter. These tasks can take 15 to 20 hours for the superintendent and total school board. Fortunately, once these initial tasks are completed, they need not be repeated except under special circumstances. The IASB Planned Appraisal Workbook provides a series of exercises that guide the board and superintendent through the developmental tasks.

A School Board Procedure

A written board procedure is a set of instructions which the school board adopts for its own guidance. Such a document serves as a reminder for the board and superintendent and as an orientation tool for new board members. Unless the board sets down in writing why and how it will evaluate the superintendent, chances are that the process will become slipshod in future years or overlooked altogether.

The policy in *Figure 5* states the school board's purposes in evaluating the superintendent and, in a general way, states what will be done. *Figure 6* presents a board procedure which contains in more detail the steps that will be followed in appraisal. A school board getting into appraisal for the first time would begin with item six in the list of steps—by analyzing management functions and the respective roles of the school board and superintendent. This analysis is essential to the writing of a job description. The analysis also provides a starting point for writing the first set of objectives for the superintendent. It also clarifies the school board's role in relation to the superintendent.

Once the board-superintendent relationship has been thoroughly examined and agreed upon, the annual appraisal cycle should be able to run without further analysis—theoretically. In practice, conditions in the district will change. Membership on the board will change. Even the superintendent may change.

Although management functions probably don't need to be re-analyzed every year, they will have to be looked at perhaps every three or four years.

The appraisal cycle itself consists of setting objectives

Figure 5—A policy for evaluation of the superintendent

Through evaluation of the Superintendent, the Board shall strive to accomplish the following:

1) Clarify for the Superintendent his role in the school system as seen by the Board.
2) Clarify for all Board members the role of the superintendent in the light of his job description and the immediate priorities among his responsibilities as agreed upon by the Board and the Superintendent.
3) Develop harmonious working relationships between the Board and Superintendent.
4) Provide administrative leadership for the school system.

The Board shall periodically develop with the superintendent a set of performance objectives based on the needs of the school system. The Superintendent's performance shall be reviewed in accordance with specified goals. Additional objectives shall be established at intervals agreed upon with the Superintendent.

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National School Boards Association

and then assessing progress toward them. This means that the board has to determine which responsibilities the superintendent is handling satisfactorily and which ones need improvement. For the latter, the superintendent can write performance objectives for board approval. Objectives also should be written to support major school district aims. Objectives need not always deal with deficiencies in performance—they also can deal with long-range goals or with new challenges facing the district. A board faced with collective bargaining for the first time, for example, might want the superintendent to acquire skills or develop staff to handle this new function. A written objective makes the board's desires unmistakable.

A Job Description

A job description is a permanent record of a management decision that somebody is to do certain work. Designed to meet the needs of both employer and employee, the job

Figure 6—A board procedure for evaluation of the superintendent

The Board of Education shall evaluate the Superintendent's performance as follows:

1) Once each year in January the Board and Superintendent will jointly review the Superintendent's job description to ensure that it accurately reflects both Board expectations and the realities of the Superintendent's day-to-day responsibilities. To the extent that there are discrepancies, the job description will be modified.

2) Also each January, the Board will review the Superintendent's progress toward agreed-upon objectives and prepare a written evaluation of his performance based on:

a) The Superintendent's results in achieving board-approved objectives.
b) Strengths and weaknesses identified by the Board in fulfilling responsibilities set forth in the job description.
c) Other concerns agreed on by the Board.

The written evaluation may contain dissenting opinions. It will be signed by the Board President and the Superintendent and one copy shall be placed in the Superintendent's personnel file. A duplicate copy will be retained by the Board President (or other designated individual, such as the Board Attorney).

3) The evaluation report also shall contain agreed-upon objectives for the coming year which are designed to correct deficiencies in the Superintendent's performance or to achieve specific Board goals for the school district. These new objectives will be developed at least once a year as a part of the Board's evaluation of the Superintendent's performance.

4) The Board and Superintendent shall meet at least one other time during the year to review the Superintendent's progress toward objectives. Progress meetings may be held more often at the option of the Superintendent or Board.

5) All evaluation meetings will be in executive session and all evaluation reports will be considered confidential.

6) As necessitated by the seating of new members on the Board and other changing conditions, the Board and Superintendent will review both the Board-Superintendent relationship and the appraisal process. Such review will include analysis of management responsibilities and the respective roles of the Board and Superintendent.

description is a blueprint for one part of an organization. In the case of a superintendent, the job description represents a blueprint for the entire school district organization.

Every position in an organization should be covered by a job description that identifies the job and describes its major responsibilities. If actual duties differ from those officially set down for the job, something is wrong. The differences need to be reconciled—either the job description is inaccurate or the employee is doing the wrong things.

An effective job description has seven characteristics. Note that the sample job description in *Figure 7* (pages 56-57) includes all seven of these items:

1) It identifies the job's title.
2) It states the qualifications required for the job.
3) It makes clear the job's position in the chain of supervision.
4) It relates the job to its ultimate client—the student—and his goals.
5) It presents the major performance responsibilities that make up the job.
6) It sets forth the terms of employment and the evaluative criteria for the job.
7) It provides for review and acknowledgement by the incumbent of the details of the job description.

Also note the italicized words in each item. These are the action words that tell the superintendent the exact nature and extent of the responsibility. These words—*attends... conducts...formulates...recommends...directs*...etc.—must be carefully chosen if the board and superintendent are to understand their respective roles. Consider the conflicts that can arise if both the board and superintendent believe that they "direct" policy development or "evaluate" staff.

The job description by itself is usually not a sound basis for appraising the superintendent's performance. The responsibilities listed in the job description are necessarily broad, for that is the nature of the superintendency. Performance appraisal requires that the superintendent's responsibilities be broken down into specific tasks so that objectives can be written in specific [illegible] reasonably measurable terms.

The job description is essential in appraisal, however. Before board members can evaluate how well the superintendent performs his job, they must know what that job is. The board must agree on:

1) The major functions of the school district (e.g., instruction, fiscal affairs, plant operations, personnel).

2) The nature of the superintendent's responsibilities in carrying out those district functions (e.g., direct, delegate, recommend).

3) The tasks which the superintendent performs in order to meet his responsibilities.

The superintendent's job description, of course, contains a listing of responsibilities. It also should mirror the district's major functions. That leaves only the third category—the specific management tasks—to be determined in developing a performance appraisal system.

The board and superintendent should work closely in examining the management tasks of the superintendent. All need to know what the superintendent does, agree on priorities, and identify strengths and weaknesses.

In the final analysis, appraisal becomes—above all else—a method of setting priorities. The board learns what demands on the superintendent's time can or cannot be controlled. The superintendent learns what the board values most, least, and in between.

Figure 7—Superintendent's job description

TITLE: Superintendent of Schools
QUALIFICATIONS: As set by State certification authorities
REPORTS TO: Board of Education
SUPERVISES: 1) Assistants to the superintendent
2) Principals
3) Legal advisor
4) Central office personnel
5) Special services
6) Consultants
JOB GOAL: To provide leadership in developing, achieving, and maintaining the educational programs and services; to administer and supervise (or cause to be administered or supervised) all activities of the school system.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1) *Attends* all meetings of the board except when his own appointment, efficiency, contract or salary are being considered, and *serves* as ex-officio member of all board committees.

2) *Conducts* a periodic audit of the total school program, and *advises* the board on recommendations for the educational advancement of the schools.

3) *Formulates* school objectives, policies, plans, and programs; and *prepares* (or causes to be prepared) and *presents* facts and explanations necessary to assist the board in its duty of adopting policies for the schools.

4) *Assists* the board in developing long-range plans to implement district goals and objectives in accordance with board policy.

5) *Recommends* to the board sales of all property no longer required by the board, and *supervises* the proper execution of such sales.

6) *Recommends* for appointment or employment all employees of the board and assigns, transfers, and *recommends* for dismissal any and all employees of the board.

7) *Directs* the preparation of the annual budget for adoption by the board, and *administers* the budget as enacted by the board, acting at all times in accordance with legal requirements and adopted board policies.

8) *Maintains* directly or through delegation such personnel records, pupil accounting records, business records, and other records which are required by law and by board policy.

9) *Recommends* the establishment or alteration of attendance boundaries for all schools in the interest of good ad-

Figure 7 continued

ministration of the instructional program, and *approves* the special transfer of students from one neighboring district to another only when, in the superintendent's opinion, conditions in each case warrant such action.

10) *Represents* the schools before the public, and *maintains*, through cooperative leadership, both within and without the schools, such a program of publicity and public relations as may keep the public informed as to the activities, needs and successes of the schools.

11) *Delegates* responsibilities to the management team according to the performance responsibilities found in their job descriptions and *coordinates* and *evaluates* the performance of the management team in their efforts to carry out board policy.

12) *Supervises* the effective carrying out of all constitutional or statutory laws, state regulations, and board policies.

13) *Communicates* directly or through delegation all actions of the board relating to personnel matters to all employees; and *receives* from employees all communications to be made to the board.

14) *Exercises* power to make such rules and give such instructions to school employees and students as may be necessary to implement board policy.

15) *Acts* on own discretion if action is necessary in any matter not covered by board policy, *reports* such action to the board as soon as practicable, and *recommends* policy in order to provide guidance in the future.

16) *Performs* such other tasks as may from time to time be assigned by the board.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT: Twelve months a year. Contract terms and salary to be determined by the board.

EVALUATION: Performance of this job will be evaluated annually in accordance with provisions of the board's policy on Evaluation of the Superintendent.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Reviewed and agreed to by: _____ Date: _____
(Incumbent)

From: Educational Policies Service
National School Boards Association

6/Describing the superintendent's job

What is a Successful Superintendent?

How well a person performs as superintendent in any given school district is determined by two factors. The first factor is the person. What characteristics and skills does he bring to the job? What knowledge, personal traits, values, and expectations does he possess? These skills, traits, and behaviors make up the criteria commonly found in the position specifications that school boards prepare when they are analyzing the qualifications of candidates for the superintendency. They include such things as judgement, organizing ability, attitude, dependability, creativity, leadership, efficiency, and so forth.

These factors generally represent minimum standards. That is, who would hire a person as superintendent in the first place who wasn't dependable or who didn't meet minimal standards of morality? This first factor, then—the nature of the person—is not so much a measure of performance as it is a way to explain the causes behind success or failure. The actual performance of a person who is not dependable will no doubt show it.

The second factor in determining performance is the job itself—the responsibilities, pressures, and constraints associated with it. What does the board want from the superintendent? What are the financial and political constraints on education in this community? How do state and federal requirements dictate or restrict administrative options?

In analyzing the superintendent's performance, boards need to make a clear distinction between the person and the job. The emphasis in performance appraisal is on *what* the superintendent does and *how well* he does it. *How* the superintendent does something should be of minimal concern unless his methods create problems. For example, suppose that a school board holds its superintendent accountable for: a) maintaining a healthy learning environment; b) main-

taining student discipline; c) maintaining positive home-school relations. The superintendent who pursues these responsibilities by using intimidation and force to maintain discipline will probably achieve one purpose and fail at the other two. Board members might well believe that the ends justify the means—if they look only at the responsibility to maintain discipline. But when they look at the learning environment or the home-school relationship, they are apt to see signs of failure. The superintendent's methods (how he does something) become a proper topic for appraisal when they are the apparent cause of a failure to get desired results.

Another example: Suppose a board holds its superintendent responsible for maintaining positive community relations. Some superintendents will try to achieve that simply through the force of their own charisma. Others prefer to rely on written communications or on training staff to build goodwill. In other words, there is more than one way to accomplish most goals. A superintendent needs substantial leeway in selecting the methods most suitable to his particular personality and skills.

School District Functions

The school board getting into appraisal for the first time needs to dissect the superintendent's job to determine what to evaluate. The first step in this process is to define school district functions. Unlike any other employee of the district, the superintendent is responsible for virtually every function under the board's control. Even though the superintendent may not perform the actual work himself, the policy-making school board holds him responsible for proper delegation of the work and gives him control over all employees within limits of the law. Thus, a list of the superintendent's management responsibilities is also a list of major school district functions.

There are many different ways to break down and categorize school district functions. For example, Genck and Klingenberg presented eight essential areas of school operations in an article in *Illinois School Board Journal* (May-June, 1974). These areas of operation represent the

major management functions in a typical school district—although there may be too many for some districts and not enough for others:

1) Management effectiveness
2) Staffing and personnel development
3) Financial status
4) Long and short-range planning
5) Educational programs
6) Board operations
7) Communications
8) Supportive operations

Another way to list approximately the same eight functions is like this:

1) Policy development
2) Personnel management
3) Instructional program
4) Pupil services
5) Budget and finance
6) School physical plant
7) Public relations
8) Board operations

Still a third way to list similar functions is presented in *Figure 4* (pages 48-49). Here each school district function is broken down into a series of tasks. Most of these tasks are essential for the lawful operation of a school district. Some are less important than others—and some may receive little or no attention at all in some school districts. In order to determine the content of the superintendent's job, therefore, a list of similar responsibilities should be developed locally for each school district.

In developing a list of district functions and management tasks, the school board and superintendent should examine such documents as the superintendent's job description, the board policy handbook, any master program plans, and a chart of the district's management organization. Also, they should consider the various activities that occupy the board's time and the superintendent's time. Such activities may not show up on job descriptions or organization charts but may well deserve priority status.

Analysis of the local organization may elevate research or

planning or some other task to the level of a major school district function. Chances are, the larger the district the larger the number of major district functions. In one district, for example, research and development may be handled by a full-time director, while it may not be handled at all in another district. By the same token, transportation may require a full-time staff member in one district while a superintendent or principal may supervise transportation services in another district.

The important thing at this point in the analysis is to get all of the important management tasks down on paper. Later, the board will have to determine who actually handles the task, the nature of the superintendent's responsibility with respect to the task, and whether the task's performance is something that needs to be evaluated.

The Superintendent's Role

It's obviously unfair to hold the superintendent responsible for tasks which the school board performs itself. If the board hires the athletic coaches, then the caliber of the coaches and the sports program are responsibilities of the board, not the superintendent. The superintendent can be held accountable—and evaluated—only for the tasks and decisions which are delegated to him.

The next step in analyzing the superintendent's job, therefore, is to look at each management task and determine who does what. One way to do this is to attach a *key action word*—a verb—to each management task. The variety of key action words is probably endless, but the list in *Figure 8* (page 62) provides a good sampling. The verb should describe the nature of the superintendent's responsibility. For example:

Functions/Tasks	Superintendent's Role
Policy development	Formulate; recommend
Curriculum development	Delegate; supervise; evaluate
Staff evaluation	Develop; implement; report
Compensation program	Research; recommend; implement
Student discipline	Study; recommend; delegate

Note that the key action words in the right hand column

describe the action the superintendent is to take regarding the function or task in the left hand column. Such a listing of actions will vary considerably among districts, because:

1) The functions and tasks listed in the left hand column will be those that seem important to each board and superintendent.

2) The role of the superintendent depends upon the role played by the school board and upon the presence of other staff to whom tasks can be delegated.

The role of the superintendent should not be viewed in isolation. It must be viewed in relation to the school board's role and in relation to the roles of other staff members. Thus, at least one other column must be added to the two shown—a column for describing the school board's role. In this way, it can be determined whether the roles of the board and superintendent mesh to complement one another. If the board's role in policy development is to "approve," then it makes sense to have the superintendent "recommend" and "implement." But what if both the board and superintendent see their roles as "approving" or "implementing?" Obviously

Figure 8—Key action words

Words like the ones below can be used to specify the role of the board or the superintendent or other staff members with respect to a specific function or task.

advise	evaluate
analyze	implement
approve	initiate
assist	interpret
compile	monitor
consult	organize
control	participate
coordinate	prepare
delegate	present
design	provide
determine	recommend
direct	study
develop	supervise

both can't enjoy the role of final approval.

Some board members may want to "direct" or "control" staff evaluation programs, while other board members may want to hold the superintendent responsible for "directing" staff evaluation.

Role clarification between the board and superintendent can produce some lively disagreements. But the board must reach a consensus on the precise nature of the superintendent's responsibilities before going on to evaluate his performance. (An entire exercise in the Planned Appraisal Workbook is devoted to role clarification, using the process described here.)

Though probably not quite so controversial, it's also important to account for the roles of other staff members. That is, the superintendent may be able to "delegate" the budget and finance functions to a business manager. This does not change the fact that the board holds the superintendent responsible for budget and finance matters—but he is responsible for seeing that the business manager does a good job rather than for actually doing the work.

When the board reaches agreement on a list of the superintendent's responsibilities (tasks and roles), it will possess the basic information needed for a job description. The problem is, many of the tasks included in the list will be much more specific than necessary for a job description. Many of the tasks probably will be related to the same general function. Moreover, the tasks will not all enjoy the same priority; some may be relatively low in importance.

However, if the superintendent does not have a job description, one can be developed from the list of responsibilities by combining, refining, and arriving at the priority items. On the other hand, if the superintendent already has a job description, it can be checked against the list of responsibilities to be sure that neither document overlooks anything important.

The next step is to determine which of the superintendent's responsibilities are appropriate for appraisal.

7/Establishing school board standards

Indicators of Effectiveness

Combining a task with a key action word describes the superintendent's role. But it does not tell what results the superintendent must get or how effective he needs to be. An important part of any appraisal is the setting of performance standards or targets. The next step, therefore, is to combine an *indicator of effectiveness* with each task and key action word.

For each item listed as a responsibility or expectation of the superintendent, the board should ask itself: "Why do we want this done? What is the purpose?" The answer becomes the indicator of effectiveness. For example:

> **Superintendent's Responsibility:** "Develop and recommend an employee compensation program."
> **Purpose:** "To attract and retain well-qualified staff."

In this example, the board will measure the superintendent's success in terms of staff quality—not in terms of reduced salary expenditures. The development of a good staff is the indicator of effectiveness. How the board and superintendent go about measuring the quality of the staff is another matter and one that should be addressed when a performance objective is written. The important point is that the superintendent now knows the school board's purpose. He knows that if the board is satisfied with the quality of the staff, he will be considered successful at developing the employee compensation plan.

Without this indicator of effectiveness, the superintendent might well go off in an entirely wrong direction. He might assume that the board wants expenditures reduced or held in check by simply maintaining parity with other districts. Certainly if the board should want something unusual—such as a pay plan that rewards performance (merit pay)—it ought to be made very clear to the superintendent.

Establishing indicators of effectiveness calls for extensive discussion between the board and superintendent. It will be easy for the board to propose indicators that are either impossible or conflicting. For example, it probably won't be possible for the superintendent to develop a pay plan that both attracts high quality staff and reduces expenditures—or one that both rewards individual performance and keeps all employees satisfied.

The results-oriented school board should be able to assign an indicator of effectiveness to each of the superintendent's responsibilities. Where the board does encounter difficulty, it probably means the board does not know why it wants something done. That suggests that the function or task is poorly stated (too broad) or is simply unnecessary.

Board Expectations

Depending on workload and staff assistance, a superintendent may find it difficult to give emphasis to all the responsibilities identified in the last chapter. A function that is minor in one district (e.g., transportation, purchasing) may be a full-time job or more in another district. Obviously, school board expectations—as expressed in budgetary appropriations, at least—guide the superintendent in setting priorities. But it is important for board members to recognize the demands on the superintendent's time and mental resources and for the superintendent to understand where board members are putting their hopes if not their finances.

Before jumping into an evaluation of how well the superintendent carries out a laundry list of responsibilities, the board should ask itself: Is this responsibility something that needs to be evaluated on an annual basis or is it something that we should examine only when problems arise? As pointed out earlier, the superintendent's duties are so many and varied that it would be impossible for the board to fully evaluate each one every year. Even the list of responsibilities suggested in Chapter Six—if it's a thorough list—contains more items than the board can handle with reasonable effort. This is where the concept of *management by excep-*

tion should be applied. The board should identify those duties of the superintendent which need to be evaluated only when problems arise. In other words, the board deals with *exceptions* (see page 43).

In any school district, expectations of the superintendency can be divided into three categories:

1) **Minimal Responsibilities** include those functions which a superintendent must perform if the school district is to operate lawfully. These functions are so numerous and so routine that many of them are assigned by the superintendent to clerical staff, and board members may not even be aware that they are taking place. These duties do not play a particularly dramatic role in performance appraisal. In fact, a school board should simply expect that they will be handled—and if they are not, the board should take it as a sign that the superintendent is not meeting the minimum requirements of the job.

Some examples of *minimal performance responsibilities* might include:

- Preparation of a school calendar for board adoption;
- Preparation of the annual school budget;
- Recruitment and recommendation for employment of all staff employees;
- Recommendations for advancement or dismissal of all employees;
- Implementation of all board policies;
- Completion and filing on time of all required government forms and reports;
- Recommendation of textbooks for board adoption;
- Preparation of agenda for board meetings;
- Serving as chief executive officer of the board.

2) **Reasonable Expectations** include those functions which the superintendent expects to perform—and which the board expects him to perform—beyond the minimal duties. Evaluation criteria for superintendents should most often be based on these reasonable expectations, although what is "reasonable" will vary among school districts and will change from year to year. These are the "effectiveness areas" where a school district typically needs administra-

tive leadership in order to provide adequate education and meet public accountability. However, the board and superintendent should reach an understanding of what is expected in each category. For example, under "staff development," one school board may settle for a certified teacher in every classroom, while another board may insist upon evidence of good teaching performance and continual improvement.

Some examples of *reasonable performance responsibilities* which a board and superintendent might agree upon include the following:

- Recommending changes in board policy where needed;
- Reviewing administrative rules and regulations;
- Preparing an annual report on the progress of the educational programs;
- Developing and implementing an inservice program;
- Developing and implementing a public relations program;
- Keeping abreast of legislative programs that affect the schools;
- Evaluating the school's financial position;
- Developing long-range goals for the district;
- Directing the development of a job description for each position;
- Participating in local civic organizations;
- Developing an administrative structure for the school district;
- Delegating authority to subordinates, monitoring their performance, and holding them accountable for results.

3) **Special Expectations** include those which reflect a school district's truly peculiar needs. A district with rapid growth, for example, may need a superintendent who can win a bond issue referendum and coordinate massive building programs. A school in a multi-racial district may require an expert in human relations. Special needs are often changing needs. New board members, for example, may switch emphasis from building programs to curriculum. Special needs also often call for big-term efforts, requiring plans that cover two or more years.

Figure 9—Categories for Responsibilities

DISTRICT FUNCTIONS	SUPERINTENDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES		
	Minimal	Reasonable	Special
1) Educational Programs			
2) Budget and Finance			
3) Personnel Management			
4) Board Operations			
5) Community Relations			
6) Pupil Services			
7)			
8)			

Figure 9 shows how a list of district functions might be analyzed to determine minimal, reasonable, and special expectations. For example, an analysis of the "personnel management" area might produce this breakdown:

Personnel Management

Minimal Responsibility—"Recruit and recommend the employment of all personnel."

Reasonable Expectation—"Develop and implement an in-service training program for all personnel."

Special Expectation—"Develop a strategy for recouping management options lost through negotiations."

This school board is saying, in effect, that:

1) **It does not wish** to evaluate the recruitment and selection of employees because the superintendent is expected to handle this routinely (perhaps through a full-time personnel director), and it is not a board priority unless

something happens to make it a problem (such as declining test scores or persistent complaints about poor teaching, excessive staff turnover, etc.).

2) The board is concerned about continued professional growth on the part of its employees. Perhaps older teachers are thought to be falling behind the times. Perhaps the board simply insists on teaching excellence.

3) The board would like to get back some of the decisions lost to the union at the bargaining table. But perhaps it is recognized as being somewhat difficult in terms of the board's bargaining position and the strength of the union. If the board decides to toughen up, this expectation can be moved to the reasonable category.

The school board and superintendent can use an expanded version of the form in *Figure 9* to list different types of responsibilities. In so doing, it's important to attach the key action word which identifies the superintendent's role—such as *"recruit* and *recommend* all personnel for employment." When the responsibilities are broken down this way, it becomes easy to see:

1) What the superintendent has to do in order to meet the minimum requirements or expectations of the board.
2) What the superintendent is expected to accomplish beyond the minimum requirements.
3) The school board's aspirations for the future.

The minimal responsibilities of the superintendency should include district functions and specific management tasks which the board can evaluate by exception. That is, the board might reasonably assume the superintendent is adequately handling these responsibilities unless there is some reason to believe that he isn't. This should be a safe assumption in a district where the superintendent is experienced and where the board and superintendent have been working together effectively for a few years. If the superintendent is new or inexperienced, the board might want to focus its evaluation on the minimal responsibilities for a year or two—or until members of the board feel comfortable with management by exception.

In the first year of an appraisal program, it's probably advisable for the board and superintendent to address all of

the superintendent's responsibilities, regardless of the category. The superintendent can be asked to give evidence of successful performance, and board members can raise questions about their concerns. The type of evidence required of the superintendent will depend upon the degree of doubt in the minds of board members. Where the board feels comfortable with performance, the superintendent may need only give his views about how the task is handled. Where serious doubt exists, the evidence of successful performance may require extensive research and preparation of data.

In some school districts, the board will be able to apply management by exception to the *reasonable* expectations of the superintendency. If the reasonable expectations are modest or if the superintendent is extremely capable, the board will find that many functions beyond the minimum are being handled exceedingly well. If the purpose of appraisal is to encourage improvement and professional growth, then the board and superintendent should move on to some more challenging expectations in the *special* category. At the outset of appraisal, however, the board should look at all of the superintendent's responsibilities to identify those which the board wants to monitor on a regular basis or those which cause problems for the district. When these problem areas are agreed upon, the board will want the superintendent to draft some performance objectives designed to correct deficiencies or to reach higher performance levels.

8/Completing the appraisal cycle

The First Appraisal

A board that has thoroughly analyzed the superintendent's job has the following information:

1) The district functions and management tasks that make up the superintendent's job.
2) The nature of the superintendent's role, whether it is to recommend, implement, develop, direct, etc.
3) A statement of purpose which provides the superintendent with an indicator of effectiveness for each responsibility.
4) The above information broken down into minimum responsibilities and reasonable and special expectations.

The board and superintendent are now ready for their first performance appraisal. This initial appraisal is different from all that will follow in subsequent years in at least one important respect: The superintendent probably has had no advance notice as to what the school board expects of him. This may be the first time that the board has really said what his responsibilities are. This initial appraisal, therefore, is apt to produce some surprises for everyone. The superintendent may be surprised to find that the board is not as happy (or unhappy) as he has supposed. The board will be surprised to learn the many forces which restrict the superintendent's activities (laws, workload, public pressure).

The results of the initial appraisal should not be regarded as final or as an ending to the appraisal process. This first effort is, in fact, a beginning. From this point forward, the board and superintendent will have a common understanding and clear set of standards upon which to base appraisal judgements.

In the first appraisal, the board and superintendent

should go through the following steps:

1) **Discuss and reach agreement** on the superintendent's strengths and weaknesses in performing minimum responsibilities. Is the superintendent presently achieving the "indicator of effectiveness" for these responsibilities? If not, is there any reason to believe he cannot easily do so now that he knows what the board expects? Those functions and tasks which the superintendent handles adequately can be evaluated by exception, assuming the board feels that it need not monitor them on a regular basis.

2) **Make a list** of minimum responsibilities representing problems that the board wants corrected. For these the board and superintendent will later write performance objectives.

3) **Through open and honest** discussion—possibly using a checklist as a springboard—identify those skills, personal traits, or behaviors of the superintendent which the board as a whole feels are problems. These weaknesses also can be brought under performance objectives.

4) **Reach agreement** on the superintendent's strengths and weaknesses in handling the reasonable expectations of the board. Except for those which the superintendent is already handling at or beyond board expectations, add them to the list of responsibilities calling for performance objectives.

5) **Review the board's** special expectations—its hopes for long-range district improvements. Are there any critical issues which the superintendent should be pursuing?

From the above categories, the board and superintendent compile a list of functions, tasks, and characteristics which represent board concerns or areas needing improvement. The next step is to put the items into a priority order. For one thing, the superintendent needs to know what comes first in the view of the board. For another thing, the list may contain more items than the superintendent can reasonably handle the first year. He should handle the most important problems first and leave others for following years.

The final steps have the board and superintendent agreeing on performance objectives and then meeting from

time to time to assess progress toward those objectives. A year later, the board has a sound basis for making a performance appraisal—that is, how well did the superintendent do in meeting his objectives?

Developing Measurable Objectives

An objective states the desired results of a specified activity with a definite purpose in mind. An objective related to peformance also states expected results.

A good objective tells:

- What is to be done
- By whom
- By when
- The expected results

For example:

> To enable the school board to maintain current policies which are up-to-date, the superintendent shall recommend for board adoption those new or revised policies required by new legislation or court decisions no later than April 1.

For this particular objective, the board will be able to judge the superintendent's performance in two ways—first, by whether he does or does not present recommendations by April 1 and second, by whether the policies prove to be adequate in guiding the district.

Most people have difficulty preparing useful objectives—especially the first time they try it. There are many things that can go wrong. Many of the potential pitfalls have already been avoided by the school board and superintendent who have carefully analyzed their respective roles and arrived at a list of priorities for improvement. They should know by now what they want to accomplish, and that is the biggest hurdle in writing objectives.

Some objectives will not lend themselves to the appraisal of effectiveness. The board will have to measure such objectives merely by determining whether something was done—such as the filing of a report or the making of a recommendation to the board. The most useful objectives, however, are those that include an indicator of effectiveness.

Writing Objectives

In most districts, the board will ask the superintendent to draft an objective for each responsibility or deficiency calling for action. Regardless of who does the actual writing, both the board and superintendent have certain responsibilities in the process.

The superintendent should:

1) Examine the problem and determine what actions he can take to meet the board's expectations.
2) Write an objective in specific, measurable terms. Make it clear what is to be accomplished and by when.
3) Be certain that the objective advances the school system and that it is both reasonable and yet high enough to demand his best efforts.
4) Accept responsibility for reaching the objective.

The school board should:

1) Be prepared to provide resources and guidance to help the superintendent develop and reach objectives.
2) Be sure that the objective is appropriate to the board's expectations, to the district's goals, and to the superintendent's growth. Avoid objectives which are trivial or too easy.
3) Discuss the obstacles that might prevent the superintendent from achieving the objectives on schedule. Allow for problems requiring alterations.
4) Establish intermediate meeting dates for checking progress. Changing conditions may dictate changes in objectives.
5) See that both the board and superintendent are fully committed to the objectives.

For boards that follow the entire development process outlined in this book, most of the work in writing objectives has already been done. The person doing the writing merely needs to combine the elements already identified into a clearly worded statement and add a completion date. It may be necessary in some cases to clarify the indicator of effectiveness or write a new one.

For example:

> **Superintendent's responsibility:** "To develop and recommend an employee compensation plan."
>
> **Indicator of Effectiveness:** "To attract and maintain a high quality staff."

To convert this to a performance objective, simply add a deadline:

> By January 15, the superintendent will develop and recommend to the school board an employee compensation plan designed to attract and maintain a high quality staff.

By January 15, both the board and superintendent will know whether the commitment to provide recommendations was met. In addition, the board has agreed upon the major criterion for evaluating the superintendent's recommendations—that is, will the plan attract and maintain a well-qualified staff?

It can be argued whether the superintendent should be held fully responsible for the eventual outcome of his recommended plan if it is adopted by the board. If the board adopts the plan, it can reasonably be said that the superintendent did his job. But what if the plan fails to achieve the desired result? What if the quality of the staff is not satisfactory? (What is meant by "high quality?" What factors besides compensation influence staff quality?)

Certainly, the board and superintendent will want to monitor the progress of the plan so that the superintendent can be held responsible for its implementation. But the board must share the responsibility for the effectiveness of the plan itself—for it was the board that agreed that there is some relationship between staff compensation and staff quality.

This is one of those many situations where the board cannot hold the superintendent responsible for the outcome of decisions which the board makes. But the board can hold the superintendent responsible for the quality of his advice, particularly on matters where the board gives the superintendent extensive flexibility.

Both in developing objectives and in evaluating the outcome, the emphasis has to be on dialogue and district improvement. The board is always free to say that the superin-

tendent's advice is no good. But that does not get at the source of the superintendent's performance problem (if he has one) and it certainly doesn't help the district improve. For the objective cited here, the board and superintendent might want to conduct some research to determine how to best improve staff quality before jumping to the conclusion that a new compensation plan is the answer.

The superintendent, as the only professional school manager in the group, must advise the board in these matters. Only the superintendent can be expected to know the results he can reasonably obtain. He should not promise more than he can deliver.

Obviously, there are opportunities here for the superintendent to cop-out, to make things easier for himself. That is why performance appraisal has to have an open and honest relationship between board and superintendent if the school district itself is to benefit. Otherwise, some members of the board may become inclined to use performance objectives as booby traps and the superintendent may want to use them to cover up mistakes.

Performance objectives do not remove subjectivity or personal judgement from appraisal. Therefore, they can be abused.

Appraisal Meetings

The superintendent's performance should be reviewed periodically with input from all of the members of the board. Committees should not be assigned this important responsibility. The frequency of these sessions may vary from district to district and may be affected by the contractual relationship with the superintendent. *Figure 10* provides a sample board policy on superintendent evaluation considering different contractual relationships.

In Illinois, an annual cumulative review of performance, including documentation, should be held prior to April 1, because contractual commitments are required by that date (unless the contract provides otherwise). For multi-year contracts, this applies to April 1 of the year in which the contract expires. It would be advantageous to hold additional review

Figure 10—School board policy

EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

In January of each year, or as soon thereafter as practicable, the board will devote a personnel session to an evaluation of the superintendent's performance (with the superintendent present). Following this evaluation, the board may re-employ or extend the superintendent's contract for one additional year.

According to Illinois law, the superintedent may be employed under a three-year contract, except if employed as a superintendent for the first time in the State of Illinois, in which case a two-year contract may be awarded. The superintendent may also be employed on a year-to-year basis; however, this option will provide district-wide tenure.

If the superintendent is employed under a three-year contract, and if the board declines to extend a three-year contract, the superintendent will have two years remaining on his contract, during which time he may improve his performance or find himself a position elsewhere or retire.

If in the opinion of the board the superintendent improves his performance during this two-year period, the board may extend his contract when it has one year remaining or when it is nearing expiration. Such extension would occur after the board's annual evaluation of the superintendent's performance. Such extension will be for a period of one year unless the board in its discretion fixes a longer period.

If the superintendent is employed on year-to-year basis, continued contractual service will be considered annually. If the superintendent is not to be re-employed as superintendent for the following year, he/she will be notified by April 1 and allowed a private hearing as required by law.

Decisions on this contract's extension or revision will be made at the first regular meeting of the board in February of each year, or as soon thereafter as practicable. If the board fails to act on the contract's extension or revision before April 1 of any year, the contract will be automatically extended for one additional year.

In accordance with board policy, this contract will not be extended beyond the year when the superintendent reaches age 65.

Legal Reference: *The School Code of Illinois*, Sections 10-21.4 and 10-23.8, NB 1597 (1975 General Session)

Date adopted:

From: STREATOR ELEMENTARY DISTRICT 45
Streator, Illinois

sessions at other times to consider progress and/or to alter expectations based on experience. At least one review session and preferably two should be held to assess progress prior to the final review of performance. Keep in mind that some objectives will take several years to accomplish and may even be written in a series of stages.

The Objective-Setting Session

The initial session when standards of performance are established cooperatively with the superintendent involves a great deal of effort by both the board and superintendent. It will be difficult and demanding, because setting standards is not easy. Without guidance, it can become a traumatic once-a-year project.

The superintendent and all board members must be committed to appraisal if the process is to be successful. Everyone must avoid the following:

1) Dominating the conversation, attempting to tell rather than listen.
2) Providing little input and blindly agreeing to adopt whatever goals or decisions that others propose.
3) Setting goals too low or unrealistically high.
4) Attempting to leave out certain objectives on the grounds that they are not precisely measurable. Many worthwhile objectives do not lend themselves to precise measurement.
5) Trying to cover up and rationalize failures, shifting the blame, and not accepting appropriate responsibility.
6) Promoting goals inconsistent with board and district goals or not related to the needs of the district.
7) Arguing that the board does not have the background nor training to tell a professional what he is supposed to accomplish.

If the ingredients of *priorities, outcomes,* and *commitments* are present, these things will not occur and the process should be beneficial and rewarding to both the board and the superintendent. Board members must be aware that their commitment to the process means that they expect the

superintendent to also be open and honest regarding the board's strengths and weaknesses. Mutual understanding can occur only when all of the participants share their concerns in an open climate free from threat and coercion.

Progress Reports

At appropriate times throughout the year, the superintendent should provide the board with progress reports on each agreed-upon objective. Aside from keeping the board informed of what is going on, this is an opportunity for the superintendent to report on any unforeseen difficulties. The board may agree to modifications in some objectives to reflect changing conditions.

Annual Performance Review

If the board and the superintendent have honestly and openly committed themselves to evaluate measurable and attainable objectives; have scrutinized and/or revised them periodically at appraisal-review meetings; and have a reasonable "feel" for results expected, they should be ready to engage in the annual performance review. The annual review conference must include:

1) The superintendent's self-evaluation of expected results, justification or explanation of how and to what degree objectives were realized, and suggestions for revising or altering objectives based on outcomes (results).
2) The board's evaluation of the superintendent's performance in meeting specified objectives.
3) A joint discussion of the board's evaluation compared to the superintendent's observations. Each objective should be analyzed to determine whether it has been realized, needs revising, or is unrealistic.
4) A written summary and documentation of the evaluation.

The way these sessions are organized will vary from district to district. The best way will be through procedures with

which the board feels comfortable. Some boards may want to meet first without the superintendent to arrive at group consensus or to neutralize diverse criticism. Such boards may also want one board member to summarize and act as a spokesperson for the whole board at the review session.

Other boards may ask individual board members to comment in writing and/or complete individual evaluation forms prior to meeting jointly. Others may be perfectly comfortable in holding all discussions in the presence of the superintendent. Of utmost importance is that all board members are candid and have input. If they cannot do so in the presence of the superintendent, then some form of presession should be initiated by the board to obtain total input.

The biggest problem for both board and superintendent will be determining how well or to what degree objectives were or were not accomplished. It is human nature to expect a "grade" rather than a discussion. This should be avoided. The process is more important than the grade, since a lay board is not endowed with the skill or time to assess educational outcomes. All outcomes may not meet expectations and results may come in various shades of gray, no matter how well they were proposed. Boards caught in this dilemna must consider the superintendent's responses as the major criteria for evaluation. If the reasons are logically explained, departures from expected results justified, and the response reasonably explained by data or circumstance, the process of evaluation by objectives has been successful. Clear-cut results cannot be guaranteed even with well-stated objectives—and rightly so, because if they were all clearly met, they were either too easy and lacked "stretch" or were unnecessary or trivial. These "gray areas" provide material for revising and rewriting objectives for the next year.

The degree to which the board is satisfied with results forms the basis for the board's evaluation of the superintendent. No scorecard is required; however, an evaluation summary should include those items which have been accomplished, those which have not (a form of remediation), and those which, although justified, require more work.

The summary should also specify those areas or problems which need attention next year and for which new objectives

should be established. Direction should also be given by the board, in writing, in areas of concern not previously specified or stated as objectives for evaluation. Any minimal expectations not met by the superintendent also should be recorded, in writing if obvious or substantiated, since this document will become the basis for remediation and future employment decisions. All of these should be made known to the superintendent. The board president or his designee should be responsible for a final written document which has an attachment for the superintendent's response. These should be kept as permanent board records.

Some boards may also use this session to establish objectives for next year, evaluate the board, direct the superintendent to prepare an agenda for an objective-setting session, or determine the superintendent's compensation and contract. None of these are absolutely necessary and can be done at later meetings. Each board should, however, establish a policy and procedure for accomplishing these important tasks.

Guidelines for Appraisal Meetings

A performance-based appraisal can be successful where procedures are agreed upon and where the errors and pitfalls in the process are understood. Here are some guidelines for the appraisal review:

1) Concentrate on performance rather than personality.
2) Concentrate on action for improvement.
3) Encourage genuine participation—let the superintendent take the initiative.
4) Let performance review influence salary review only indirectly, because other factors are included in salary determination.

Questions to be asked during appraisal:

1) Are practical and realistic standards identified for each of the superintendent's major responsibilities?
2) Are the board's expectations clearly stated?
3) Have indicators of effectiveness been identified for each major responsibility?

4) Are suggestions for improvement noted?
5) Were problems stated accurately?
6) Were objectives stated using measurable terms (or at least observable)?
7) Were objectives practical and realistic, yet challenging?
8) Will appraisal achieve desired results?
9) Are target dates realistic?

Don'ts for appraisal review:

1) Don't dictate what someone should do or think.
2) Don't manipulate by trying to get predetermined conclusions.
3) Don't talk too much—listen!
4) Don't display bias for your own ideas and suggestions.
5) Don't attack or attempt to alter the views of others.

Errors in appraisal meetings:

1) Traits or personality emphasized.
2) Emphasis on incidents—nagging.
3) Hiding one's own views.
4) Focus on activities, not results.
5) Focus on items which cannot be controlled.
6) Being too rigid.
7) Implied emphasis on "pleasing me."
8) Discussion of salary.

In the process of appraisal, the following rules of fairness and consideration should be followed:

1) Strive for fair and equitable treatment of the superintendent.
2) Make competence and performance the keys.
3) Make decisions when they are needed without undue delay.
4) Be consistent and do not vacillate—but admit it when you're wrong.
5) Be understood.
6) Keep your word.
7) Find time to show concern for misfortune, to commend

excellence, and to offer encouragement during stress and difficulty.

8) Be warm, humane, and operate with the smallest possible ego.
9) Follow through and remember significant details. Sort out for insignificance.
10) When a big decision is coming up, hear all sides.

Compensation and Appraisal

Some educators insist that appraisal and salary remain separate on the assumption that any "merit" emphasis destroys the honesty of the evaluation and is threatening to those being evaluated. Although in some cases this may unfortunately be true, it also indicates a generalized fear about evaluation with or without compensation included. This general reluctance on the part of school boards to consider performance-related compensation is the major reason that educational management has lagged behind the private sector in evaluating effectiveness and has helped to create the demand for schools to be more businesslike.

It is inconsistent to encourage effective performance in an appraisal process and at the same time separate appraisal from compensation. Performance appraisal is bound to have a psychological impact on salary decisions. Those who do not perform do not deserve to be rewarded. Anything else defies logic.

Performance, however, is only one factor in setting salary. Basing salary decisions exclusively on performance appraisal is unrealistic. Other considerations are: comparisons of salary with those of other employees; the responsibility level of the particular job; comparisons of salary with similar positions in other districts; the employee's market value outside the district; past practice in individual compensation; the compensation policy of the district; the district's ability to pay; and economic conditions in the community.

Salary policies and procedures must be specified clearly and will undoubtedly include factors other than performance. However, to reward a poor performance at the same

level as a superior performance may effectively negate performance evaluation and even discourage the high performer.

9/In conclusion. . .

Changing Times—Changing Roles

Every school board should be deeply concerned with the effective management of its schools—more so than ever before.

A few years ago, the public school was perceived as a big happy family, with dedicated students, teachers, administrators, and board members all working as a team. This is no longer the case. Today, teachers are joining unions that look out for their interests. Students are no longer as pliable as they used to be, either, and their parents have taken on a new posture. They want to know why costs are going up while test scores are coming down.

Because people's expectations of the schools are changing, the superintendency is changing, as are the people who fill it. The successful superintendent today is not the benevolent dictator, but the skillful manager who gets the most and the best out of his people.

Also as a result, public school management is in a state of transition, moving away from the "big happy family" toward a more businesslike arrangement of roles and responsibilities. Out of necessity, school management is moving toward a better understanding of what each person's job is, whether that person be a board member, superintendent, principal, or teacher. Unless roles are clarified, regulated by written policy, and regularly reappraised, school management may weaken and collapse.

Teacher bargaining is forcing school managers to step back and reassess the situation, to ask themselves: "How are we going to ensure good teaching now that our teachers belong to a union? How can we be certain the union doesn't take over the decisions that need to be made by the board...or by the superintendent...or by the principal?"

Teacher bargaining has dramatized—perhaps created—the need for role clarification in education. School boards can no longer pretend that, because teachers and adminis-

trators are all educators, they all have exactly the same jobs or exactly the same concerns, same needs, or same responsibilities.

The first step is to recognize there is a difference in the roles of management and labor. The job of management is to see that goals are identified and that the institution's energies are directed toward those goals. The effective manager is one who gets the most out of his employees in terms of the institution's goals. He helps his employees capitalize on their strengths and overcome their weaknesses. The job of labor is to produce results in line with the reasonable expectations of management.

Many people today are trying to better define the respective roles of school boards and their superintendents. With the increasing pressure on everyone, people want to know where they stand. "What exactly is my job? To whom am I responsible? How will I be evaluated?"

The Illinois Association of School Boards and the authors sincerely hope that the appraisal program presented here and in the companion workbook will enable interested school boards to set off in the right direction.

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Planning a Superintendent Appraisal System

For school boards that want to adopt the performance appraisal system described in this handbook, the Illinois Association of School Boards has developed a series of developmental exercises. The exercises are contained in a workbook that guides the board and superintendent through analysis and decision making.

The workbook—entitled *Ten Exercises Toward Planning a Superintendent Appraisal System*—consists of the following:

1) **Determining the Need for Superintendent Appraisal**
2) **What Should be Evaluated?**
3) **Evaluating the Board-Superintendent Relationship**
4) **Identifying Management Responsibilities**
5) **Role Clarification**
6) **Developing Indicators of Effectiveness**
7) **Preparing a Job Description**
8) **Using Checklists**
9) **Classifying Effectiveness Indicators**
10) **Writing Objectives**

Where Do You Go from Here? Completion of the exercises is just the beginning, so the workbook also offers guidelines and forms for the annual appraisal review.

For more information about the workbook, call or write:

Illinois Association of School Boards
330 Iles Park Place
Springfield, Illinois 62718
217/528-9688